

قصص النساء في القرآن

QURANIC STORIES *of* WOMEN

Abdul Mun'im Hashmi

Translated by
Rafiq Abdur Rahman

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Introduction

الحمد لله الزين ارسل رسول بالهدى و دين الحق ليظهره على
الزین كله واشهدان لا اله الا الله واهب النعم ومصرف
الامور واصلى واسلم علم على رسوله الكريم صلوات الله
وسلامه عليه.

The stories of the Qur'ān are distinguished because of their beauty and excellent objective. Narratives from the Qur'ān offer us beneficial knowledge and guide us to approved principles and laws. We derive lesson from them.

We hope this attempt at providing stories of women in the Qur'ān will meet approval of our readers. These stories are not for a selected section of readers, but for everyone.

Our aim is to present them in a beautiful manner. But, the real aim is to gain Allah's pleasure. We pray to Him to accept our humble effort and to make it beneficial to every reader. Aamen.

And Allah is The One Who Enables.
Abdul Mun'im al Hashmi.

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام

إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا ﴿٢٦﴾

I have vowed a fast to the Compassionate (19:26)

Allah the exalted says:

وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ﴿١٦﴾
فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾
قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ
وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَى
هَيْنٌ وَلَنَجْعَلَ لَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾
فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ﴿٢٢﴾ فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى
جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَلَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾
فَنَادَتْهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ﴿٢٤﴾ وَهَزَى إِلَيْكِ
جِذْعَ النَّخْلَةِ السَّقِطَ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا
فَإِمَّا تَرِينِ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ
الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

And mention in the Book Maryam, when she withdrew from her people to an eastern place. Then she took a veil apart from them; then We sent unto her our spirit (an angel) that appeared to her as a (perfect) sound man. She said, "Surely I take refuge in the compassionate from you if you are God-fearing." He said, "I am only a messenger from your Lord that I may bestow on you a chaste son." She said, "How shall I have a son whereas no man has touched me nor have I been unchaste?" He said, "So it shall be! Your Lord says, 'That is easy for Me and that We may appoint him a sign for mankind and a mercy from Us. And it is an affair decreed.'" Then she conceived him and withdrew with him to a remote place. Then the birth pangs drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree. She said, "Would that I had died before this and become a thing forgotten, in oblivion." Then (the angel) called to her from beneath her, "Grieve not! Your Lord has indeed placed beneath you a rivulet. And Shake towards you the trunk of the palm-tree, dates will drop on you, fresh (and) ripe. So eat and drink and cool (your) eyes. And if you see any mortal, say, 'Surely I have vowed a fast to the compassionate, so I shall not speak today to any person.'" (19: 16-26)

Before she was born, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام had been devoted by her mother, Hinnah bint Fāqūdh, for the service of Bayt al-Maqdas as part of her vow. When she was born and grew up, she became mother of a prophet whose birth and life were a miracle. He has not died till today though his enemies had imagined that he was dead. He will be honorable and the chosen one in both the worlds. Let us begin with an insight into the life of Hinnah bint Fāqūdh before we speak of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام.

Hinnah bint Fāqūdh was childless. She longed to have a child that she might be happy. Her longing increased when she saw a bird with her young or a woman carry her child. She grew old past child bearing age, and her husband, Imrān Ibn Māthān was a scholar of the Banū Isrā'il. Both of them never lost hope in Allah's mercy - for, only the infidels lose hope in Allah. She looked pleadingly and turned toward the Lord of heaven and earth and made vow that if her desire was fulfilled and a son born to her she would give him for the service of Bayt al Maqdis - a dedication. She resolved to herself humbly that she

would not take any other service from him. He will be left free to serve Allah's house. Hinnah did not have in mind worldly motives through her child.

Finally, the day arrived! She felt movement in her womb. Her happiness know no bounds. She was radiant and she rushed to convey the tidings to her husband, Imrān Ibn Māthān. Both were very happy.

Their days passed very happily. She bore the travail patiently and eagerly. But, times are not always alike. Happiness and grief take turns. Imrān Ibn Māthān did not survive to see his child. That turned the tables on Hinnah. Her cheerful radiance gave way to a gloomy darkness. She lost strength. Tears came to her eyes. Her dear Imrān had longed to see their child. What can be done? It was the will of Allah.

Her sister, Easha', visited her to condole her husband's death and share her grief. She was the wife of Zakariya ibn Barkhiya عليه السلام who had kept her happy and advanced her knowledge. When Hinnah wished that Imrān had lived to see their son, Eeshā' said, O sister! How can you say that it will not be a daughter?" Zakariyā عليه السلام confirmed, "Only Allah knows what the womb carries." Then they departed, hoping that the birth of the child would bring back happiness to Hinnah.

The waiting ended with the birth of a daughter. Hinnah reflected, "Its not a son." She turned to her Lord, saying:

رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَئِنَّ الذَّكَرَ كَأَلَّا نُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي
سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾

My Lord! I have delivered a female" - and Allah knew best what she had delivered, and the male is not like the female - "and I have named her Maryam and I seek protection for her and for her progeny with you from the accursed Satan."

She wondered that a son would have been dedicated to Bayt al- Maqdis and she could have thus shown gratitude to Allah and praised Him. She felt grieved. She named her Maryam and prayed to Allah humbly. "Protect her. Bestow Your mercy on her. Let her be like her name," for Maryam means 'one who worships,' She went on, "Let her name raise Your glory,

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invocation and praise." And she prayed that He protect her from the devil.

Allah showed mercy to her and accepted her prayer and removed her grief. She offered her daughter for the service of Allah's House and He approved her offering and vow. He perfected His blessing on Maryam. Allah told her that He would let Maryam be the focus of His mercy and compassion. So, she wrapped her in a garment and took her to Baytal Maqdis where she handed her over to the servant and religious scholars, and thus she fulfilled her vow. She entrusted her Maryam to Allah, The Majestic, The Glorious, with whom she was pleased within her heart. The helpers at Baytal-Maqdis numbered thirty and each vied to take the child as his ward because she was the daughter of a righteous man, Imrān Ibn Māthān who had been a prominent servant at Bayt al -Maqdis. But, Zakariya claimed right to guardianship over Maryam because she was niece of his wife, Eeshā.

However, the scholars disputed his claim and everyone had an argument in his own favour. Finally, the issue was decided by casting lots. All of them went to a nearby river and threw their pens into it. The pens went down the river, except the pen of Zakariya which floated on its surface. Thus, it was decided in his favour and everyone conceded that Zakariya would be guardian of Maryam. He brought her to her aunt Easha' and decided to build for her a small chamber within the worship hall so that she may devote herself to Allah with concentration away from other people. She grew up in his care and he visited her on and off in her chamber where no one else was allowed entry. Years passed away. She kept fast during the day and occupied herself in remembering Allah by night with humbleness of heart. Nothing hindered her from worship of Allah. She was humility personified. Zakariya عليه السلام was astonished by something: her chamber was at an elevated level within Bayt-al-Maqdis and he knew that no one besides him visited her, yet he found with her sustenance which included fruit of all seasons. When he asked her how she got it, Maryam عليها السلام said that she got it from Allah who gives sustenance to whomsoever He pleases as much as He pleases. Thus, Zakariya عليه السلام was convinced that she was chosen for a high station. Suddenly, he also longed for a child knowing that even in his old age, Allah can give him a

child as he gave Maryam عليها السلام fruit out of season. He knew that his wife was barren, but he told himself that Allah was omnipotent and His mercy was all-compassing. So, he raised his hands towards heaven and called to his Lord in a soft voice that no one but the All-Powerful the all-hearing and The Knowing Omnipotent Allah alone could hear. He asked for a child:

رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ
رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ﴿٤﴾

My Lord! My bones are weakened within me, and My head is glistening with hoariness, and I have never been unblest in My prayer to You, My Lord! (19 : 4)

Then he gave reasons for his request, the main being that he was uneasy on account of his kin. He submitted:

وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ
لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ﴿٥﴾

And I fear My Kinsfolk after I am gone. (19:5)

Actually, he was apprehensive of his cousins who were among the evil people of the Banu Isrā'il lest they manipulate the religion after his death. So, he prayed to Allah to bestow him a righteous son who should lead the people.

وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ
لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا يَرْثُنِي ﴿٥﴾ وَيَرْثِ مِنْ عَالٍ يَعْزُوبٌ وَأَجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ﴿٦﴾

And I fear My kinsfolk after I am gone, and may wife is barren, so grant me from Yourself a heir, who shall inherit me and inherit the Household of Ya'qūb and make him, my Lord, acceptable (to You)." (19 : 5-6)

Allah accepted his prayer and said:

يَنزَكِّرُنَا إِنَّا تَبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ

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And I fear My Kinsfolk after I am gone. (19:5)

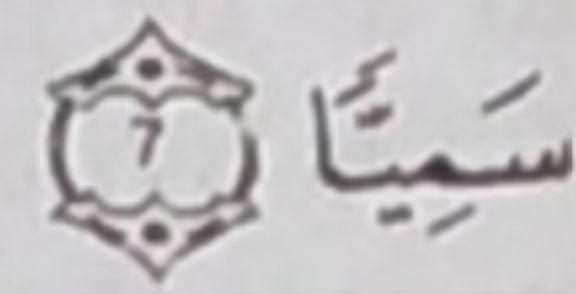
Actually, he was apprehensive of his cousins who were among the evil people of the Banu Isrā'il lest they manipulate the religion after his death. So, he prayed to Allah to bestow him a righteous son who should lead the people.

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And I fear My kinsfolk after I am gone, and may wife is barren, so grant me from Yourself a heir, who shall inherit me and inherit the Household of Ya'qub and make him, my Lord, acceptable (to You)." (19 : 5-6)

Allah accepted his prayer and said:

يَزَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ



O Zakariya! We give you the glad tidings of a son, whose name is Yahya. We have not made for him, a foretime, namesake. (19 : 7)

Thus did Allah favour him. Meanwhile, Sayyidah Maryam grew up, piety and righteousness writ large on her face. She concentrated on fasting and salah and let not anything else interfere in that. There came a time of hardship on the people and Zakariya عليه السلام found it difficult to care for her, so he asked if anyone else would take over from him the responsibility of her provision and maintenance. One of the righteous men who also was her relative, Yusuf Najjar volunteered to take over her charge from Zakariya عليه السلام. Allah showered on him His blessings. Provision to her, he found that she already had different variety of food and fruit. So, he asked her about it and she said:

هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

That is from Allah. Surely Allah provides sustenance to whomsoever He will without measure. (3 : 37)

However, she did not know that those were signs and miracles of Allah. She was unaware of unseen affairs and had no authority on her concerns. The food that she received and the undisturbed concentration with which she worshipped Allah were signs of Allah's power. One day she had to go out to fetch water from a nearby cave when she suddenly encountered Jibril عليه السلام in human form. He said to her:

إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

I am only a messenger from your Lord that I may bestow on you a chaste son. (19 : 19)

She drew back shocked at his words, saying:

إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

Surely I take refuge in the Compassionate from you if you are

God-fearing. (19 : 18)

She wondered if he was an evil man who spoke such words without hesitation though they are not spoken to a woman in privacy by a stranger. She defended herself and said:

أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

"How shall I have a son whereas no man has touched me nor have I been unchaste?" (19 : 20)

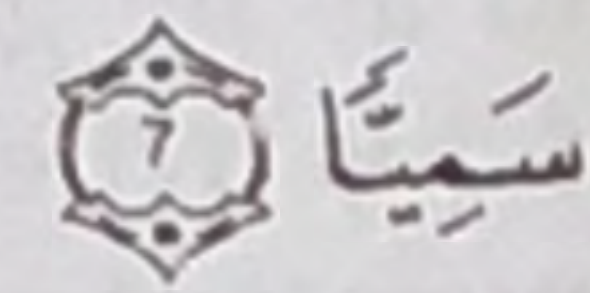
In the solitude she spoke to him in unambiguous words. Jibril عليه السلام tried to rid her of her anxiety, saying:

كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَى هَيْنٍ وَلَنَجْعَلَ لَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾

So it shall be! Your Lord says, 'That is easy for Me; and that We may appoint him a sign for mankind and a mercy from Us. And it is an affair decreed.' (19: 21)

When Allah decides to do anything He merely says كن (Be!) and that happens. Jibril عليه السلام went away after that conversation. Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام was in a shock thinking over what she was told. She wondered. "People will ask how did an unmarried girl conceive? She was scared. She secluded herself. She was mentally upset and found no inclination to eat food. She paid no attention to anyone and only occupied in worship.

She went away from people and from her close relatives to Nāsirah not far from Bayt -al- Maqdis where she was born. She did not want anyone to know her secret and disgrace her. She pleaded with Allah to relieve her of her dilemma and be merciful to her. She knew that she was innocent and that people will make her miserable but she did not know that what had happened to her was a miracle and its confirmation by the masses was also a miracle. She shed tears and raised her head slowly appealing to Allah, "O Lord, I ask You for Your pleasure and pardon. You know what is in my heart but I know not what is Your intention." She had only one thing in mind: to resign to Allah's will. And she made more worship of Allah. The term of



O Zakariya! We give you the glad tidings of a son, whose name is Yahya. We have not made for him, a foretime, namesake. (19 : 7)

Thus did Allah favour him. Meanwhile, Sayyidah Maryam grew up, piety and righteousness writ large on her face. She concentrated on fasting and salah and let not anything else interfere in that. There came a time of hardship on the people and Zakariya عليه السلام found it difficult to care for her, so he asked if anyone else would take over from him the responsibility of her provision and maintenance. One of the righteous men who also was her relative, Yusuf Najjār volunteered to take over her charge from Zakariya عليه السلام. Allah showered on him His blessings. Provision to her, he found that she already had different variety of food and fruit. So, he asked her about it and she said:

هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (37)

That is from Allah. Surely Allah provides sustenance to whomsoever He will without measure. (3 : 37)

However, she did not know that those were signs and miracles of Allah. She was unaware of unseen affairs and had no authority on her concerns. The food that she received and the undisturbed concentration with which she worshipped Allah were signs of Allah's power. One day she had to go out to fetch water from a nearby cave when she suddenly encountered Jibril عليه السلام in human form. He said to her:

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She drew back shocked at his words, saying:

إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا (18)

Surely I take refuge in the Compassionate from you if you are

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pregnancy was nearing its end. She left Nāsirah to go to Bayt al-Lahm where she sat down under a dried palm – tree, there being no greenery around, nor hope of help from anyone. She could not find a midwife too, nor did she have her mother around to give her encouragement. But, she did have fear for people taunting her and accusing her. Would that she had a husband to comfort her and share her joy! She had the pains and a son was born to her. She looked at him longingly and said:

يَلَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾

Would that I had died before this and become a thing forgotten, in oblivion. (19 : 23)

She was on the point of being disgraced by her people and Allah showed His miracle to remove her grief and showered His mercy to her. We will look into it shortly. This indeed was a great event.

That was indeed a very happy moment when the child spoke and thus removed his mother's worries. He made available food for his mother. That was a great miracle from Allah, a mighty sign of His omnipotence. She was amazed.

فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ﴿٢٤﴾

Then (he)¹ called to her from beneath her, "Grieve not! Your Lord has indeed placed beneath you a rivulet. (19 : 24)

"Look, O Mother, water flows over the dry land, and the dry tree has fruit – fresh dates. Hold the branch and call it to you and eat the fresh dates. Drink the water. Do not worry but be happy and calm. Allah will not fail us. He will not let you down. Use this flowing water to purify yourself." Allah says"

وَهَزَى إِلَيْكِ الْخُلَّةَ تَسْقُطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾

And shake towards you the trunk of the palm-tree, dates will drop on you, fresh (and) ripe. (19 : 25)

1. Chawla has the words "(the angel) called."

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام was all joys. She looked with fixed eyes at her son and held the branch of the tree, dates began to fall down and she had her full. She was grateful to Allah and praised and glorified Him. Meanwhile, her cousin, Yūsuf Najjār, came and learnt of her condition and saw Easā, (عليه السلام)

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام received a divine command that she should not speak to anyone who asks her about her son.

فَإِمَّا تَرِينَ مِنْ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

And if you see any mortal, say, "Surely I have viewed a fast to the Compassionate, so I shall not speak today to any person." (19 : 26)

In fact, those people used not to speak to each other when they kept a fast. She spent the post child- birth blessing period in a cave with her son. Yūsuf served her all the while. After that, she returned home only to face the people who taunted and rebuked her reminding her of her pious parents. They said:

يَعْرَبُهُمْ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ يَتَأَخَذَتِ هَهُنَا مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ أَمْرًا سَوِيًّا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٨﴾

"O Maryam! You have certainly brought a thing heinous. O sister of (the Household of) Hārūn! Your father was not a wicked man, nor was your mother an unchaste woman." (19 : 27-28)

Not only the birth of her child but also her defense of the birth was a miracle of Allah. She pointed to the child instead of giving an answer. The people were awe-struck:

كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ﴿٢٩﴾

How shall we speak to one who is in the cradle, a (mere) child? (19 : 29)

But, before they could say more Sayyidina Eesā عليه السلام began to speak:

إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ۖ وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا
كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ۖ وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ
يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ۖ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ
أُفَعَّرْتُ حَيًّا ۖ

I am a servant of Allah. He has given me the Book and appointed me a prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I may be; and he has enjoined on me Salāh and Zakāh so long as I live, and (has made me) dutiful to my mother, and has not made me arrogant, un-blest. And peace be upon me, the day I was born and the day I die and the day I am raised up alive. (19 : 30-33)

The newborn gave an evidence ----- better then which no one can offer on earth ---- to establish the chastity of the most honorable women, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام. This was Allah's miracle. His is able to do what He likes and He made the child speak eloquently to establish the truth of his birth without a father. It was his words that put down the mischief and removed all doubts. His birth to Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام was soon known all over Bayt ul Lahm and Nāsirah and the doubts were replaced by confidence that the child (like his mother) was innocent.

The child grew up normally under the love and care of his mother. Those days Herodus ruled over the territory and someone told him about the child and warned him that he might become famous and a leader. He suggested that the child must be eliminated forthwith. Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and Yūsuf Najjār learnt of this conspiracy. So, Yusuf Najjar took them to Egypt where peace prevailed. Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام taught and trained her son who, even as an infant, showed signs of prophethood. He would tell his friends what they eat at home and he told people what they hoarded. His teachers testified that he was very intelligent and observant. He stayed in Egypt for twelve years when Herodus was no more and his mother took him back to Palestine, to Nāsirah near al-Khalil. When he was thirty years old, Jibrīl عليه السلام visited him and brought divine messages. He brought him a Book from Allah confirming the

Torah. Thus, Sayyidina Eesā عليه السلام began to preach to people to love and show peace and follow him. He also undertook to guide the Jews who had digressed from the right path and had adulterated the teachings of Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام. They made it their aim to amass wealth and used places of worship to collect money from people on various pretext, whether they could afford to give or not. Some of them had become atheists.

Syyidina Eesā عليه السلام went to every village and preached. He cured the sick by Allah's permission and when he blew on dust it became a live bird by Allah's permission. He thus won over people's hearts.

He also preached to soothsayers and had set apart a day for the common man at Bayt al- Maqdis and they came from distant lands to listen to him. Soon he had a large following. But, this provoked the soothsayers. They conspired against him, but Allah always helps and protects His prophets.

وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمُنْكَرِينَ ۖ

And Allah is the Best of devisers. (8: 30, 3: 54)

His mother, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام kept encouraging him. She supported and comforted him when the people increased their opposition to him. The soothsayers instigated their Roman rulers against Sayyidina Eesā عليه السلام, telling them that he would turn out to be dangerous to the Qaysar. These people assembled in the Bayt al-Maqsid to ponder over this matter and they decided to hang (Sayyidina) Eesā عليه السلام. He learnt of their resolve and alternated between coming out in public and going underground. Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, though worried for her son, was confident that Allah would protect him and he would emerge successful against his enemies. Meanwhile, he and his disciples confined themselves in a garden near Bayt al Maqdis imagining that they were safe, but the Romans got scent of them. When Sayyidina Eesā's عليه السلام disciples learnt that they were traced, they deserted him. But, Allah does not leave His prophets in the lurch. Allah made him invisible to the people and turned one of the seekers like him. They nabbed and assaulted this man. Bewildered at his predicament, he could not utter a word or defend himself. He

had been in the forefront of the conspirers. As for Sayyidina Eesā عليه السلام :

وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن سُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ
مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾

And in fact they did not slay him, nor did they crucify him, but only a likeness of him was shown to them. (4 : 157)

He was raised to the heaven while his look-alike was sent to the scaffolding. When he was hanged, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام came. She was grieved and a woman tried to comfort her. Eesā عليه السلام had cured her of a disease. Two of his disciples, Sham'un and Yahyā, came and confided to her that, before he was raised to heaven, Sayyidina Eesā عليه السلام had instructed them to serve her and to carry on his mission. She prayed for them and devoted herself thereafter to the care of the needy. She joined Sham'un and Yahyā to propagate the message of Eesā عليه السلام. Some responded positively and others stuck stubbornly to their wayward life.

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام did not cease to keep fast and worship Allah. She continued to get her provision from Allah. Six years after Sayyidina Eesā عليه السلام was raised to the heaven, Allah took away Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام to Him. A large caravan of angels took her in a procession. Allah caused her to be remembered well and the Qur'an mentions her with praise as one of the best worshippers. Her name will be remembered forever as a pure and chaste woman. Allah says of her:

وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِنَا
وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتِبَ عَلَيْهَا مِن الْقَنِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

And (the similitude of) Maryam عليها السلام daughter of Imrān, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her Our spirit, and she testified to the truth of the words of her Lord and His Books and she was of the devout ones. (66 : 12)

May peace be on the pure and noble Maryam عليها السلام! On the truthful Maryam عليها السلام! On the first worshipper and obedient woman! On the most honorable woman of the

universe! On the daughter of Imrān! And peace be on her son, Eesā عليه السلام on the day he was born and on the day he will die and on the day he will be resurrected! Ameen.

Further Reading:

- 1) Stories from the Qur'an, Mawlana Seoharvi, (English Translation) Daral Isha'at, Karachi v 1 p 563. Maryam عليها السلام and her mother.
- 2) Ibid v 2 p 285-288. Was Maryam عليها السلام a prophet? V 2 p 295, Can a woman be a prophet? V 2 p 289.

Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام

قَالَتْ يَوْنِلَيَّْ ءَالِدٌ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا
إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ ﴿٧٢﴾

She said, "Woe is me! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman, and this my husband is an old man? This assuredly is a strange thing." (11: 72)

Allah, the Exalted, says:

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ
جَاءَهُ بِعِجْلٍ حَنِيذٍ ﴿٦٩﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَى أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تُصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ وَأَوْجَسَ
مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمِ لُوطٍ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَامْرَأَتُهُ قَائِمَةٌ
فَضْحَكَتْ فَبَشَّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ ﴿٧١﴾ قَالَتْ يَوْنِلَيَّْ
ءَالِدٌ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ ﴿٧٢﴾ قَالُوا
أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ رَحِمْتُ اللَّهُ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ إِنَّهُ حَمِيدٌ
مُجِيدٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

And certainly Our messengers came to Ibrāhīm with the glad tidings. They said, "Peace!" He answered. "Peace!" and made no delay to bring a roasted calf. And when he saw their hands

not reaching towards it, he was suspicious of them and conceived a fear of them. They said, "Fear not; we have been sent to the people of Lut," And his wife was standing by; so she laughed when We gave her the glad tidings of Ishāq, and after Ishāq, of Ya'qūb. She said, "Woe is me! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman, and this my husband is an old man? This assuredly is a strange thing." They said, "What, do you wonder at Allah's command? The mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, O people of (Ibrahim's) Household! Surely, He is Praiseworthy, Glorious." (11: 69-73)

Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام - Khalil Allah (Allah's Friend) ---- adopted a farsighted attitude with the tyrant and arrogant king of Iraq who claimed divinity for himself. Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام rejected the argument of the ignorant and cruel king. The king of Babel was Nimrud Ibn Kin'an Ibn Kaush Ibn Sam Ibn Nuh.¹ The historians say that he was one of the two disbelieving kings who ruled over the world, the other was Bakhtnash (Nebuchadnezzar). There also were two Believers who ruled over the world, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام and Dhul Qarnayn. Nimrud is said to have ruled over Babel for four hundred years unleashing tyranny and oppression. He preferred the worldly life of luxury to faith in Allah and was provoked when anyone invited him to religion. It is Allah's practice that He send someone always to guide people to the right path, and keep them away from the devil. So, Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام came to him as a preacher inviting him to Allah, the one, Who has no partner. But he rejected the teachings and argued with him extending foolish evidences that he was divine. Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام said:

رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death. (2 : 258)

Nimrud claimed that he too could do that but he had a narrow outlook. He had two men who had been sentenced to death brought to him and ordered that one of them should be executed and the other set free, boasting. "Look, I gave life to

1. Stories of Prophets, Ibn Kathir, p 97, Darul Isha'at, Karachi.

one and death to the other." Now Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام had to give him a silencing argument. He said calmly:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

Surely Allah brings the sun from the east; so you bring it from the west. (2 : 258)

Nimrud was dumbfounded and had no answer.

فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

There upon he who disbelieved was confounded. And Allah guides not the evildoing people. (2 : 258)

Nimrud hated the Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام in his heart but he had resolved to emigrate from there. He took what ever he could take with him. His wife Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام was with him. She had been the first to believe in his call. He also had his nephew, Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. So, he said:

إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾

Surely I will flee to my Lord. Surely He is the Mighty, the Wise. (29 : 26)

The caravan of the faithful departed till these people were at Hurān a place between Iraq and Palestine, and they ended their journey to Palestine, hoping to get ample sustenance of life. However, the Palestinians were beset with famine and had nothing to live on. So, prophet Ibrāhim عليه السلام took his caravan to Egypt where an arrogant king dominated the people. He was Bakuis. Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام was very beautiful both in appearance and in her inner qualities of deep faith. She fascinated anyone who saw her at first sight. So, one of this king's men who had seen her with Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام described her beauty to the king to get into his good books. The king resolved to get this woman, so he sent one of his men to fetch Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام who had guessed the real reason for the summons. In fact, when they met, the king's first question was, "How is this girl related to you?" Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام was apprehensive lest the king eliminate or

punish him, so he said, "She is my sister." Thus, the king knew that she was unmarried and he commanded his servants to bring her to him and prepare a separate room for her. Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام rushed back to her and told her of what had transpired, adding, "Do not betray me but confirm that you are my sister. There are no other Muslims and we are engaged in religious fraternal ties." The king's men took her away to his palace. When the king advanced towards her, Allah benumbed his hand. He pleaded with her to pray to Allah for his recovery and promised not to touch her with evil design. She prayed to Allah and He restored to him his hand. The king, having regained movement of his hand, failed to learn from his affliction and again advanced towards her. He again lost use of his hand and pleaded with Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام to pray to Allah for his recovery. She prayed and Allah cured him but he did not desist and again lost use of his hand. This time, he shrieked and begged to be given a last reprieve and offered a firm assurance of good conduct. She prayed to Allah and Allah again cured him. The king shouted addressing his guards, "Come! Take her back to her place." And he said to the man who had brought her, "What jinn had you brought to me. She was not a human being. Go away from my territory!" The king had learnt that she was Sayyidina Ibrāhīm's عليه السلام wife and he released her giving her a beautiful girl, Hajar,¹ as a gift. This was a great trial for Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام who had traveled to seek sustenance and came across this man who sought to take away from him his wife, but Allah, the Glorious, helped His forbearing slave and protected his life, property and family.

Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام resided in Egypt for a long duration. He worked hard for a livelihood and Allah blessed his earnings. Though he was well-off, the jealous and the cruel people did not spare him from harassment. He prayed to his Lord and thanked Him. He praised Him and remembered that He had heard his prayer to save his wife when the cruel king had evil designs against her. Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام too praised and glorified Allah and thanked Him for His blessings. She stood up on recalling those terrifying moments of trial when the cruel king had lost sense of decency but Allah saved her. She

1. This (Hajar) is the Arabic name, but we often come across it as Hajarrah.

performed ablution and offered Salāh as though conducting herself on this verse:

وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ﴿٤٥﴾

And seek (Allah's) help in perseverance and Salāh. (2 : 45)

Allah protected her. She was the wife of His messenger who was His habib and khallil (beloved and friend). Allah would never leave His messenger's wife in the lurch for anyone to molest her. While she was with the king, Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was enabled to see her. He saw the king losing power over his hand and that she was safe. Thus, he was at peace at heart and sure that she was unharmed.¹ Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام loved her because she was very pious and God-fearing and perseverant. She was near to him and very beautiful. It is said that there was no one more beautiful than her since Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام.

Return to Palestine

Allah's friend, Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام departed from Egypt towards the sacred land. His entourage comprised a large number of his slaves, his property and his livestock. Sayyidah Hajar عليها السلام, the Qubtiyah (Copt) and Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام were also in the party. He instructed his nephew, Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام to stay in Ghawr keeping the property and livestock with him. This was the land to Sudūm (Sodom), a central territory whose people were wicked and disbelieving.

Allah revealed to Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام that he and his offspring would possess that land and he will have a large progeny and he would make them a Muslim Ummah. They would spread justice all over the world and rule the people according to Allah's commands. Indeed, this is how the Islamic world was for many years.

Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and his wife Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام lived in this manner in Palestine for twenty years. They had no children. He often prayed to Allah to bestow him pious

1. Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah (The migration of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, Khalil Allah to Syria); also Stories of the Prophets, published by Darul Isha'at.

children. Allah gave him the glad tidings one day, and Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام sighed to him, "Allah has not given me a child, but you go to this my slave. Perhaps, Allah will give us children from her womb."¹

Sayyidah Hajar عليها السلام was trustworthy and obedient. She had good character and she devoted herself wholeheartedly to the service of Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام. He agreed with his wife and was very happy and satisfied. He bowed his head before Allah. Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام gave Sayyidah Hajar عليها السلام in marriage to her husband, Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and said to herself, "I will not leave Ibrāhīm عليه السلام for a woman who wishes to deprive me of him. But, Hajar is my salve. She is sincere and faithful. Their marriage will not hurt me." So, he married her. Indeed, she conceived a child and a pious and handsome son, Ismā'il عليه السلام was born to her. Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام were overjoyed and the entire house of the Prophet عليه السلام joined together in praise and glory of Allah, the one, the omnipotent who grants happiness and blessing to His slaves. Allah, the Exalted, says:

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ ﴿٢٤﴾

Peace be upon you, for that you persevered - how blessed is the abode of the Hereafter! (13 : 24)

However a human being is never of one mind. Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام was overcome with anxiety. A human soul does not incline to sympathies with a fellow human and her happiness at Ismā'il عليه السلام birth gave way to sorrow and melancholy. She shed tears wondering why she did not have such a son. Had she not accompanied Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, faced the tyrant, obeyed her Lord and her husband? But, Allah's ways have wisdom behind them. She could only resign herself to a life without her own children. Patience was her lot. Many years went by. She grew old and feeble. Her face was wrinkled and her hearing and sight grew weak. But, her heart was yet full of faith and hope. She controlled her anger and sorrow. One day, however, she gave vent to her feelings and told her smiling

husband to take away Hajar عليها السلام and her son for from her sight so that she may neither hear about them nor see them.

She loved her husband and wanted to keep him to herself. Though he asked her if she (Hajar) was not her loved slave and she confirmed that, yet she wanted her away and also he was told by Allah's revelation that he should do as she said. Allah had decided something for Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام. Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام took a riding beast and took mother and son along and traveled towards a distant land. Allah was their companion during the journey which was very wearisome for the infant and his mother and for Ibrāhīm عليه السلام. But, Allah does what He wills.

After a long travel, Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام stopped where Allah commanded him to stop. It was near Allah's House- the BaytAllāh. It was a desolate place with no water around. He left Ismā'il عليه السلام and his mother in this lonely place. They had only a tiffin-carrier containing some food, a water skin with water enough only for Ismā'il عليه السلام and nothing else. Ibrāhīm عليه السلام began to retrace his steps. Sayyidah Hajar عليها السلام was quick to ask, "Where are you going?" But he gave no reply. She repeated her question and even tried to hold him back by his garment and by pulling at the beast. How would the child survive? She pleaded with him to have mercy on them and tried her best to make him change his mind, but she failed. There only was one possibility for his conduct. Perhaps, it was Allah's command and Ibrāhīm عليه السلام had no choice. So, she asked him, "Has Allah commanded you to do it?" He wasted no time to say, "Yes". She said spontaneously and calmly, "Certainly, Allah will not neglect us,"¹ and she returned to her son, Ismā'il عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام went away and when he was out of sight of Sayyidah Hajar عليها السلام, he raised his hands in prayer and prayed to Allah:

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بُوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنْ

1. Stories of the Prophets, Ibn Kathir p 103, Darul Isha'at, Karachi.

1. Stories of the Prophets, p 101.

الْتَمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

Our Lord, surely I have made some of my progeny to dwell in a valley uncultivable, near Your sacred House. Our Lord! That they may establish salāh; so make You the hearts of some of mankind to yearn towards them, and provide them with fruits that they may give thanks. (14 : 37)

Honorable guests of Ibrāhim عليه السلام

Allah, the Exalted, says:

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا
قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ فَرَاغَ إِلَيْكَ أَهْلِيهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَقَرَّبَهُ
إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَبَشِّرُوهُ
بِعُلْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَأَقْبَلَتْ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَقٍ فَصَكَتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ
﴿٢٩﴾ قَالُوا كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٠﴾

Has there come to you the story of the honored guests of Ibrāhim? When they entered upon him, they said, "Peace!" he said. "Peace! They are a people unknown to me." Then he turned to his household and brought a fattened calf. So he laid it before them. He said, "Will you not eat?" Then he conceived a fear of them. They said, "Fear not." And they gave him glad tidings of a knowledgeable son. Then came forward his wife clamoring, and she smote her face and said. "An old barren woman!" they said, "Thus says your Lord. He is the wise, the knower." (51 : 23-30)

That was a mighty and auspicious day for her. A great miracle was demonstrated on that day. She was to have a child. And a command was issued from heaven to decimated a habitation where cruel people resided. This was an auspicious day for Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام whereas before that only Sayyidah Hājar عليها السلام and Ismā'il عليه السلام were concerned.

Meanwhile, Sayyidina Ismā'il عليه السلام was occupied in worship of Allah. He had finished just a little of that when three young men came to him. Their faces reflected beauty and piety.

They greeted him with salaam and Ibrāhim عليه السلام responded to their salaam. He looked at them for some time and welcomed them. They were angels, Jibril عليه السلام, Mika'il and Isrāfil. عليهم السلام¹

Then Ibrāhim عليه السلام slaughtered the best calf he had and cooked it for his guests. He was not aware of their reality. He offered them to eat but they did not eat. He asked them politely. "Why do you not eat?" One of them said, "O Ibrāhim عليه السلام, We do not eat without paying for it." He said, "Its price is that you say bismillah before eating and Al-Humdulillah on having finished eating." Jibril عليه السلام said to Mikā'il عليه السلام, "This man really qualifies to be Allah's Khalil (Friend)."²

Both Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام and Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام observed that their guests did not eat. They felt some fear. They were angles who do not eat. Then Jibril عليه السلام stroked the meat with his hand, and it turned into a calf that went directly into the shed to its mother.³ Ibrāhim عليه السلام became more fearful. The angels said to him:

لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ لُوطٍ ﴿٧٠﴾

Fear not; we have been sent to the people of Lūt. (11 : 70)

They identified themselves as angels who had come to eliminate the mischief on earth by the people of Lūt عليه السلام. No one will be safe and every house and its occupants will be destroyed. They asked Ibrāhim عليه السلام not to fear or griever and said that they were Allah's angels. Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام laughed on hearing of the destruction of the people of Lūt عليه السلام while they were unaware of it. They continued to increase in their disbelief and wicked ways. Prophet Lūt عليه السلام kept preaching to them but they disregarded his advice mindless of the consequences. They pursued that which the devil made beautiful for them and neglected their wives but sought pleasure with young lads.

1. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surah adh-Dhariyat.

2. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surah Hūd.

3. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surah Hūd.

When she laughed, the angels conveyed to her a great news – of the birth of a pure, handsome son to her, Sayyidina Ishāq عليه السلام. They also gave glad tidings of Ya'qūb عليه السلام.

Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام expressed surprise and, in the fashion of women, smote her face. "How will that be?" she said that both of them were old, past child-bearing age. The angels said:

أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ رَحْمَتُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ إِنَّهُمْ حَمِيدٌ
مُجِيدٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

what, do you wonder at Allah's command? The mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, O people of the household! Surely He is praiseworthy, Glorious." (11 : 73)

Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was also surprised. He asked:

قَالَ أَبَشِّرْتُمُونِي عَلَى أَنْ مَسَّنِيَ الْكِبَرُ فِيمَ تَبَشِّرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ قَالُوا بَشِّرْنَاكَ
بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ الْفَلْطِيطِ ﴿٥٥﴾

He said, "Do you give me glad tidings when old age has overtaken me? Of what do you then give me glad tidings? They said, "We give you glad tidings with truth, so be not you of the despairing?" (15 : 54-55)

The angels told him that Allah will bestow a son who will be knowledgeable. He is Ishāq عليه السلام, brother of Ismā'il عليه السلام who has been described as clement, tolerant and, indeed, he was perseverant. At the same time, they were told of Ishāq's son, Ya'qūb عليه السلام.

فَبَشِّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ ﴿٧١﴾

We gave her the glad tidings of Ishaq, and, after Ishaq, of Yaqūb. (11 : 71)

The angels winded up their message by saying that Allah sends His mercies and blessings to the family of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and Allah is praiseworthy for whatever He says and does. Then

Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام experienced menses after a lapse of many years at the age ninety plus.

When Sayyidina Ibrāhīm's fear subsided and he received the good news of a son from Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام he praised Allah in his heart and thanked Him. He made this supplication:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ
الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٩﴾ رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ ﴿٤٠﴾

All praise belongs to Allah who granted me, despite (my) old age, Ismā'il and Ishāq. Surely my Lord is the Hearer of Prayer. My Lord! Make me the establisher of the Salāh, and of my progeny (too), our Lord! And accept You my prayer. Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and the believers, upon the day when the reckoning comes to pass. (14 : 39-41)

Then he asked the angles if they would uproot a place where three hundred Believers also resided. They said that they would not do that. Then he asked about a place with two hundred Believers and they said, "No". He went on asking about different numbers – forty thirty-till he come to five and one, and each time they said, "No, O Ibrāhīm عليه السلام!" So, he said:

إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطًا ﴿٣٢﴾

Surely in it is Lūt. (29 : 32)

The angels answered:

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِيهَا لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا أَمْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ
الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

We know very well who is in it; we shall certainly deliver him and his household, except his wife; she is to be of the lingerers. (29 : 32)

When she laughed, the angels conveyed to her a great news – of the birth of a pure, handsome son to her, Sayyidina Ishāq عليه السلام. They also gave glad tidings of Ya'qūb عليه السلام.

Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام expressed surprise and, in the fashion of women, smote her face. "How will that be?" she said that both of them were old, past child-bearing age. The angels said:

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مُجِيدٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

what, do you wonder at Allah's command? The mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, O people of the household! Surely He is praiseworthy, Glorious." (11 : 73)

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بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ الْقَانِطِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

He said, "Do you give me glad tidings when old age has overtaken me? Of what do you then give me glad tidings? They said, "We give you glad tidings with truth, so be not you of the despairing?" (15 : 54-55)

The angels told him that Allah will bestow a son who will be knowledgeable. He is Ishāq عليه السلام, brother of Ismā'il عليه السلام who has been described as clement, tolerant and, indeed, he was perseverant. At the same time, they were told of Ishāq's عليها السلام son, Ya'qūb عليه السلام.

فَبَشَّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ ﴿٧١﴾

We gave her the glad tidings of Ishaq, and, after Ishaq, of Yaqub. (11 : 71)

The angels winded up their message by saying that Allah sends His mercies and blessings to the family of Ibrāhim عليه السلام and Allah is praiseworthy for whatever He says and does. Then

Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام experienced menses after a lapse of many years at the age ninety plus.

When Sayyidina Ibrāhim's عليه السلام fear subsided and he received the good news of a son from Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام he praised Allah in his heart and thanked Him. He made this supplication:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ
الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٩﴾ رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ ﴿٤٠﴾

All praise belongs to Allah who granted me, despite (my) old age, Ismā'il and Ishāq. Surely my Lord is the Hearer of Prayer. My Lord! Make me the establisher of the Salāh, and of my progeny (too), our Lord! And accept You my prayer. Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and the believers, upon the day when the reckoning comes to pass. (14 : 39-41)

Then he asked the angles if they would uproot a place where three hundred Believers also resided. They said that they would not do that. Then he asked about a place with two hundred Believers and they said, "No". He went on asking about different numbers – forty thirty-till he come to five and one, and each time they said, "No, O Ibrāhim عليه السلام" So, he said:

إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطًا ﴿٣٢﴾

Surely in it is Lūt. (29 : 32)

The angels answered:

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِيهَا لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا أَمْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ
الْفَٰرِثِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

We know very well who is in it; we shall certainly deliver him and his household, except his wife; she is to be of the lingerers. (29 : 32)

Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام kept quiet on hearing this and abstained from being cordial to the angels, and they said, "Cease to make this pleas. Your Lord has made the decision and destruction is their lot. They will be punished for, punishment is not averted from the wrongdoing people. The angels went there and, at dawn, uprooted the habitation. Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام also observed the destruction, he had been rescued with his daughters but his wife perished because she followed the evil people.

As for Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام, Sayyidina Ishāq عليه السلام was born to her. Allah prolonged her life and she regained health and strength. Then Ishāq عليه السلام married Rāfaqa bint Batūil عليها السلام.¹ She too was barren but when Sayyidina Ishāq عليه السلام prayed for her, she gave birth to twins, one after the other. Ishāq عليه السلام named him Ya'qūb. Thus, Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام was pleased on seeing her grandson, Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq عليهم السلام.

Allah's promise to His believing slaves is always true.

Now, Sayyidah Sārah عليها السلام did not wait for a child at her old age but looked forward to her son growing old – his infancy, youth and manhood and then the promised prophethood.

Allah granted her another blessing too. Her grandson as a child spoke, "My grandmother! This is Allah's mercy and blessing. Greetings of the angels for Sārah عليها السلام." She found Allah's promise to be true. She became a mother and a grandmother and a great example of Allah's power. She passed the rest of her life by Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام. She witnessed the construction of Bayt al-Maqdis and died at the age of a hundred and thirty years or a hundred and twenty seven years.

She was ever-smiling. She had spoken to the angels and Allah had blessed her with His bounties. She died at al-Khalil in Palestine having been a staunch supporter of her husband and children. She was wife of a kind husband and she was very kind and obedient. Shall we emulate her as our leader? Shall we too entrust our affairs to Allah? He is the Being who bestows without limit to one He chooses and is very kind. He knows all about His slaves.

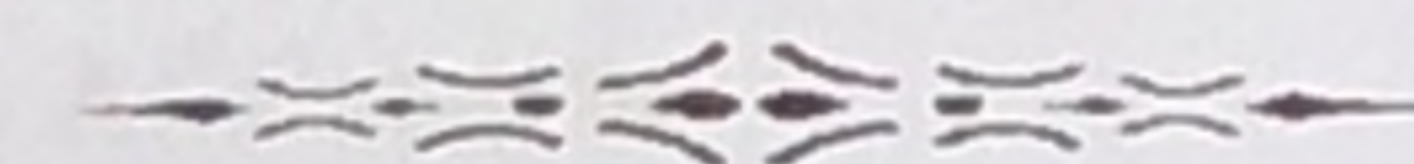
1. Al-bidayah wa an. Nihayah.

Peace be on you, O Sārah عليها السلام and Allah's mercies and blessings.

O family of Ibrāhim عليه السلام, peace be on you, His Mercies and blessings. He is praiseworthy and Glorious.

Further Reading:

Stories from the Hadith, Muhammad Zakariya Iqbal [Darul Isha'at] English translation, p 57.



Sayyidah Aasiyah عليها السلام

About whom Allah says:

إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ ﴿١١﴾

When she said, "My Lord build for me a house in the Garden in Your Presence. (60 : 11)

Allah the exalted says:

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِن فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١١﴾

And Allah has struck a similitude for those who believe - the wife of Fir'awn, when she said, " My Lord, build for me a house in the Gorden in Your presence, and deliver me from Fir'awn and his dc'ngs, and deliver me from the evildoing people. (66 : 11)

Aasiyah عليها السلام is an exemplary women worth emulating by Muslims. She lived in strong palaces camouflaged in deep green dense trees, the Nile flowing underneath with clean, pure water. But, despite the many blessings, she was not happy and content. Now what could have been the cause of her worry? That was her faith. She beseeched her Lord to deliver her from her husband and his evil deeds, and from his wrong-doing

Sayyidah Aasiyah عليها السلام

About whom Allah says:

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لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِن فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهٖ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الظَّالِمِيْنَ ﴿١١﴾

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About whom Allah says:

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Aasiyah عليها السلام is an exemplary women worth emulating by Muslims. She lived in strong palaces camouflaged in deep green dense trees, the Nile flowing underneath with clean, pure water. But, despite the many blessings, she was not happy and content. Now what could have been the cause of her worry? That was her faith. She beseeched her Lord to deliver her from her husband and his evil deeds, and from his wrong-doing

people. Her husband was at the centre of it The nearest person to a heart is the spouse But, how did it begin.

Fir'awn resided luxuriously in his large palaces and extensive gardens like any other king. He was extremely cruel and harsh to his subjects and he was very arrogant and stubborn. He was particularly cruel to the Banū Isrā'il whom he chastised mercilessly. They lived a pitiful life in his country but were patient and quiet.

One day, one of Fir'awn's astrologers told him of a son that would be born to the Banū Isrā'il and would topple his kingdom. This meant more hardship for the Banū Isrā'il. Fir'awn went berserk and violent. He had every male child of Banū Isrā'il slaughtered and he spared their females. However, Allah relieved them of their plight.

A woman, Yukābid, resided near Fir'awn's palaces. She was at the end of her term of pregnancy. When the pains began, she retired to a corner and sent her daughter to fetch a midwife posthaste. She brought her in time and a beautiful son was born to her. But, she was fearful of Fir'awn's men who might kill him. How could she save him. She let no one know of the child and for three months she suckled 'Musa' without anyone learning of his birth. Fir'awn's spies were always on the rounds eyeing for every new born. But, Allah was with the woman and He inspired her to make a chest, place the child into it and put the into the Nile, directing her daughter to follow it along the banks. This inspiration brought peace to her heart. She and her daughter put the chest in the Nile quietly unseen by anyone. Allah took it in His protection, and Yukābid returned home. Her daughter watched the chest rise up and go down with the waves that finally lodged it on the marble stairs by the palace. Fir'awn's wife and daughters and their maid-servants used to go up and down these stairs. Aasiyah عليها السلام saw the chest from a window, a beautiful child in it. The child was taken out and Fir'awn's men who were around were equipped with weapons meant to slaughter male offspring of Banū Isrā'il. Before they could incite Fir'awn to order this child's execution, Aasiyah عليها السلام came to them and said:

لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَن يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا ﴿٩﴾

Slay him not. It may be he will profit us, or we will take him for a son. (28 : 9)

Sayyidah Aasiyah عليها السلام pleaded with her husband and finally coaxed him to spare the child. Mūsā was taken as Fir'wan's son. Aasiyah عليها السلام loved him dearly and the child won over their hearts. As for his mother, her worry was set at rest. She had entrusted the child to his Creator who strengthen her faith and gave comfort to her heart.

The members of the palace began to search for a nurse for the child. They brought several wet-nurses but he was the son of a king before whom haman and the whole army prostrated. He did not take milk of any one of them. He was inspired by Allah. His sister was around and she offered to show them a wet nurse whose milk the child would take, saying that she was moved by the child's weeping. The girl, Maryam, went to her mother and, though she was apprehensive that Fir'awn's men might detect her as the child's mother, she accompanied her daughter to the palace. Aasiyah عليها السلام was trying to quiten the child. Yukābid said, "My Mistress! Let me have the child." Aasiyah عليها السلام asked the girl if she had brought that wetnurse and she confirmed that she had. Indeed, the moment Yukābid picked up the child he was quiet and took her milk. Aasiyah عليها السلام too was pleased and comforted at that, but Fir'awn was perplexed. He put some questions to her and when she said that all infants responded to her in that manner, he instructed his minister, Hāmān to raise her salary and her satatus. Yukābid was very happy and her faith in Allah became stronger. She persuaded Aasiyah عليها السلام to let her take the child home for suckling. Thus he was returned to her and she was much grateful to Allah for that. Whenever Aasiyah عليها السلام wished, she sent for the child and kept him with her. Soon, he began to crawl, to stand up with some support and to speak a few words, but he was not happy with other women. He grew up and was soon a young man and Aasiyah's عليها السلام love for him became deeper. He was like her son. While she loved him, she was always fearful of her husband's wickedness. Yukābid had already turned him over to Aasiyah عليها السلام when the suckling period was over. Fir'awn was unaware of his fate at the hands of the child. Aasiyah عليها السلام, on her part, was fed up with Hāmān and the others who

prostrated before Fir'awn and addressed him with exaggerated titles.

She was also repulsed when her husband claimed, "I am your Lord" and wondered if he had gone mad. She never did as those people did.

One day, a man Hizqil, husband of one of the maids of Aasiyah's عليها السلام daughters, informed her that Mūsā had killed a man of Egypt when he was quarreling with one of the Banū Isrā'il who had appealed to Mūsā for help. Hardly had he finished speaking when they heard Fir'awn roar, "Where is Mūsā?" The demanded that his sentries must arrest him and bring him that he might punish him. Aasiyah عليها السلام was worried on Mūsā's account. She prayed to Him in whom she believed, besides whom where is no god. She prayed to Him to save Mūsā. Hizqil slipped away and ---- true believer as he too was ---- informed Mūsā:

إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يَتَمَرُّونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَاخْرُجْ إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

The chiefs are counselling together regarding you that they might slay you; so depart; surely I am to you one of the sincere advisers. (28 : 20)

Mūsā took the cue and escaped from the city. Hizqil went to the palace and quietly confided to Aasiyah عليها السلام that he had sounded the warning to Mūsā who had fled from the city. She thanked Allah who had protected Mūsā from the evil-doers. She pleaded with Hizqil to find out where Mūsā was because he had grown under her care, but he expressed ignorance of his whereabouts and said, "He is in Allah's protection, Allah, the creator, the One, the Independent."

Years passed away but Mūsā did not return. Aasiyah عليها السلام was dejected and longed to see him. But Mūsā was out of sight and nothing was heard of him. Even Firawn and his henchmen forgot Mūsā. They were certain that he would never return.

Many years later, Mūsā returned. This time as a prophet. He brought true religious teachings from his Lord who had commanded him to go to Fir'awn to get release the Banū Isrā'il from his captivity.

Fir'awn and his henchmen had enslaved the Banū Isrā'il and perpetrated every kind of evil on them. Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام had come with clear signs from his Lord to put down Fir'awn's cruelty. But, he had the fear of murder on his mind. He prayed to Allah:

رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿٣٣﴾

My Lord, I have slain a man from among them, so I fear lest they slay me. (28 : 33)

Allah comforted him. So, he said in prayer:

قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ﴿٢٥﴾

My Lord! Expand for me my breast. (20 : 25)

وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي ﴿٢٦﴾

And ease for me my affair. (20 : 26)

وَأَحْلِلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي ﴿٢٧﴾

And loose a knot from my tongue. (20 : 27)

That I may speak eloquently and they may heed my words.

وَأَجْعَلْ لِي وَزِيرًا مِنْ أَهْلِي ﴿٢٩﴾

And appoint for me a minister from my household. (20 : 29)

هَارُونَ أَخِي ﴿٣٠﴾ وَأَشْرِكُهُ فِي أَمْرِي ﴿٣٢﴾

Harun, my brother and associate him in my affair. (20 : 30 and 32)

Aasiyah عليها السلام had no knowledge of this, or what weapons Mūsā عليه السلام had. But when she learnt of it, she wondered how Fir'awn would deal with them, for, she knew his arrogant nature over the years. She learnt that Mūsā عليه السلام was due, so she took a position from where she could eye Firawn's court.

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Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام and Hārūn عليه السلام entered Fir'awn's palace to enforce Allah's command that they should let him know that they were Allah's Messengers to him and that he should stop oppressing the Bānū Isrā'il. Aasiyah عليها السلام was observing the proceeding from the perch. Mūsā عليه السلام said:

فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ وَلَا تَحْذَرِهِمْ

so send forth the children of Isrā'il with us, and chastise them not. (20 : 47)

Fir'awn ignored this demand. He reminded Mūsā عليه السلام that he had grown up at his palace and lived there for years together. Aasiyah عليها السلام who heard him, realized the track Fir'awn was following and might turn hostile. But, Mūsā عليه السلام was quick to interrupt, "Do you remind me of this supervision during my childhood and classify it as a favour? Listen, this was because of your cruelty and wickedness otherwise I would have grown up where I was born and, even here, I was nearly slain but Allah's mercy saved me. My growth in your palace is testimony of your cruelty and maltreatment of the Bānū Isrā'il".

Fir'awn flew into a rage. He said, "You killed a man before and now deny my favours." Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام said that the killing was unintentional and I fled out of your sphere but Allah's mercy and blessing guided me to knowledge and wisdom and I was chosen as His Messenger. After some pause, Fir'awn asked what the Lord of the worlds was. Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام asked him to look at the signs around him, on the universe and in himself, and at the blessings available to him, he said, "My lord is creator and Master of the earth and the heavens and whatever is in between them."

This aggravated Fir'awn's anger and he began to shout. His voice carried through well beyond his court. He asked his courtiers to ask Mūsā عليه السلام and Hārūn عليه السلام who their lord was. Mūsā عليه السلام said, "My Lord is your Lord and Lord of your ancestors, of the east and west and of whatever is between them ---- if you have sense."

Fir'awn threatened to put him behind bars if he called upon other than him as god. But, Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام offered to convince him with clear signs and miracles. Would he then

believe? So, Fir'awn challenged him to bring real miracles. Aasiyah عليها السلام who was hearing this discourse wondered if Mūsā عليه السلام would bring miracles or perform sorcery, for, in the latter case he would be routed by Fir'awn's magicians. She then told herself that Mūsā عليه السلام would bring miracles. Suddenly, he raised his staff and swinging it dropped it on the ground. It gave out no sound but turned into a large serpent that raised its head and bared its poisonous teeth. Fir'awn was terrified. It crawled towards him and looked as though it would swallow him.

Anyway, he kept his cool and asked, "Mūsā عليه السلام, is that all? Or do you have more?" He put his hand under his armpit and brought it back shining white causing eyes to blink, and its light brightened the surroundings.

Aasiyah عليها السلام saw these things and knew that Allah was helping Mūsā عليه السلام, and that Fir'awn would be defeated. Of course, she was scared of the serpent but then regained composure and hoped that Fir'awn would be frightened by it and concede that Mūsā عليه السلام was true.

But, her hopes were crushed when Fir'awn accused Mūsā عليه السلام and his brother of being sorcerers. His ministers advised him to summon the best sorcerers from all over Egypt and subdue Mūsā عليه السلام through them. Aasiyah عليها السلام knew the story of the sorcerers but she pondered over the words of Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام:

إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ وَلَا تَحْذَرِهِمْ قَدْ جِئْنَاكَ بِبَيِّنَاتٍ
مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَىٰ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَىٰ

Surely we are two Messengers of your Lord, so send forth the children of Isrā'il with us and chastise them not. Indeed we have brought you signs from your Lord; and peace be upon him who follows the guidance! (20 : 47)

إِنَّا قَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْنَا أَنَّ الْعَذَابَ عَلَىٰ مَن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ

It has been indeed revealed to us that chastisement shall alight upon him who belies and turns away. (20 : 48)

She was impressed by Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام eloquence. She remembered also how he described his Lord:

رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى ﴿٥٠﴾

Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation, then guided (it). (20 : 50)

Failed in the debate, particularly when he asked:

فَمَا بَالُ الْقُرُونِ الْأُولَى ﴿٥١﴾

What then is the position of the former generations? (20 : 51)

Mūsā عليه السلام gave this reply:

عَلَّمَهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّي فِي كِتَابٍ لَا يَضِلُّ رَبِّي وَلَا يَنْسَى ﴿٥٢﴾ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْ نَّبَاتٍ شَتَّى ﴿٥٣﴾ كُلُوا وَارْعَوْا أَنْعَامَكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي النُّهَى ﴿٥٤﴾

The knowledge thereof is with my Lord, in a Book; my Lord errs not, nor forgets. He who appointed for you the earth as a cradle and has threaded for you therein pathways, and sent down water from heaven. So thereby We have brought forth all kinds of plants; eat (those from) and pasture your cattle. Surely in that are signs for men of reason. (20 : 52-54)

She gave full thought to these words and was indeed the first women to believe in Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام. She spoke of that to her maid servant, wife of Hizqil who was a Believer but had concealed his faith. His wife too was a Believer. While they were conversing. They heard Fir'awn shout. "Tomorrow Mūsā عليه السلام will learn a lesson. His sorcery will turn to naught."

The next day people gathered in an open place and the sorcerers displayed their magic. Their ropes crawled as snakes and Fir'awn and his ministers were delighted. Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام had some fear about the result because his staff would also become as their ropes. What difference that would make?

Allah comforted him, but Aasiyah عليها السلام trembled with fear. Suddenly, Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام threw his staff. Lo! That was a quick moving serpent swirling along. It swallowed every snake that came in its path. Soon it had eliminated all snakes. Aasiyah عليها السلام was very happy and very nearly gave out her secret but she restrained herself and said softly الحمد لله (Praise belongs to Allah). She praised Him more when the sorcerers declared their belief in Allah. Fir'awn executed the sorcerers for believing in Allah but, on the day of Resurrection, Allah will reward them heartily.

Dejected, Fir'awn returned to his palace as did Aasiyah عليها السلام. Not a word was spoken. Then he sat down in his large court and roared:

ذُرُونِي أَقْتُلْ مُوسَى وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ أَنْ يُظْهِرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٦﴾

Leave me to slay Mūsā and let him call upon his Lord. Surely, I fear that he may change your religion or that he may cause corruption in the land. (40 : 26)

Suddenly, a man got up from the centre of the assembly and spoke. He was Hizqil, the husband of Aasiyah's maid-servant. She hoped that he would not speak, for otherwise Fir'awn would punish him. But, he spoke in a loud voice;

أَنْقَتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَقُولَ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ وَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَإِنْ يَكُ كَذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُ وَإِنْ يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِيبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَابٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ يَقَوْمُ لَكُمْ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ ظَاهِرِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَنْ يَنْصُرُنَا مِنْ بَأْسِ اللَّهِ إِنْ جَاءَنَا ﴿٢٩﴾

Will you slay a man because he says, "My Lord is Allah," and indeed he has brought you the clear proofs from your Lord? If he be a liar, so upon him will be his lie, and if he be truthful, there will befall you some of what he threatens with. Surely Allah guides not one who is a prodigal, a liar. O My people! Your is the kingdom today, being masters in the land; but who

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will help you against the punishment of Allah, if it comes upon us?" (40:28-29)

Fir'awn got very angry. He was taken aback at Hizqil's daring, the way he defended Mūsā عليه السلام and preferred him over Fir'awn! He declared his faith in Mūsā's Lord in public though Fir'awn was their Lord! Moreover, Hizqil did not stop at that. He offered advice to the courtiers:

يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِثْلَ يَوْمِ الْأَحْزَابِ ﴿٣٠﴾ مِثْلَ دَابِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ
وَعَادِ وَثَمُودَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظَلَمًا لِلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣١﴾ وَيَقَوْمِ إِنِّي
أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّنَادِ ﴿٣٢﴾ يَوْمَ تَوَلَّوْنَ مُدْبِرِينَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ

وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

O my people! I fear for you the like of the day of the confederates — the like of the case of the people of Nuh, and Aad, and Thamud, and those after them. And Allah intends not evil for His servants. And O my people! I fear for you the day of Mutual Calling the day on which you shall turn away, retreating; for you there will be no protector from Allah, and he whom Allah sends astray, for him there is no guide. (40:30-33)

Aasiyah عليها السلام listened attentively to him, but was also worried that Fir'awn would punish him severely. As for him, Fir'awn had resolved to eliminate Hizqil. No one before had spoken to him or to his courtiers in this manner. As for Hizqil, his words had no effect on Fir'awn who became more devilish and hard-hearted.

Hizqil quietly slipped away. Rather, Allah delivered him from Fir'awn's punishment, for, he was a very sincere and simple man who preached to people without fearing censure.

Fir'awn retired to his room and conversed with Aasiyah عليها السلام about Mūsā عليه السلام, recalling how he had raised him up in the palace but he founded a new religion against him. He was very angry and perhaps hinted at the prediction of the soothsayer about a child of Bānū Isrā'il growing up to overthrow

him. He sensed that Aasiyah عليها السلام was not paying attention to him and seemed not to agree with him.

So, he shouted and asked her why she did not see eye to eye with him, "Are you not my wife?" She asked, "Why do you dislike Mūsā عليه السلام?" he was surprised. He said, "Because he does not agree that I am divine. He calls upon a God other than me." She said, "You have misgivings about Mūsā عليه السلام. Think over what has happened today. Ponder over it — why, is not Mūsā عليه السلام on the right path? Do you not confirm the lies of your minister, Hāmān?"

She added, "Hāmān does not like Mūsā عليه السلام and wishes that you oppose Mūsā عليه السلام. He also likes that you only have him in mind. Why do you not agree that Hāmān is wrong and Mūsā عليه السلام is correct?"

He was quiet for some time and looked at her with surprise. What kind of talk was that from her? Now, he had doubts about Aasiyah عليها السلام. He was also suspicious of the wife of Hizqil, the maid servant of his daughters. So, he set spies against them. Ultimately, he learnt that Hizqil's wife was a follower of Sayyidina Mūsā عليه السلام. This provoked Fir'awn beyond measure because Mūsā's religion had made inroads in the palace. It was adopted by his wife, his servant and those who always respected him and believed in him as god. He commanded in a loud voice that Aasiyah's maid servant as well as the maidservant's husband, Hizqil, should be slain. They should be punished till they died.

Aasiyah was worried about her maid servant. She said, "My maid servant knows nothing about these things." She hoped that Fir'awn might not punish her, but he paid no attention to her words. In fact, he alluded that she too was under suspicion. He got up and stared at Aasiyah عليها السلام and shouted, "Where is Hizqil's wife? Bring her before me." He commanded his courtiers.

They came and nabbed her---Aasiyah's maid servant, the beautician of Fir'awn's daughters who was wife of Hizqil. They grabbed her from all sides--- someone took her arm, someone pulled her hair. They dragged her to Fir'awn. He put questions to her. "O treacherous woman, who is your Lord?" she said, "My Lord and yours is Allah who has created all of us."

This answer infuriated Fir'awn and he instructed his men to put her into fire. He said, "Rather, first burn her sons in her presence that she might see them die."

The fire was kindled. Meanwhile, Fir'awn caused her more hardship. He did not stop at that. They tortured her infant son in her presence. The son looked at his mother and said, "Dear Mother, be patient. You are right. Aasiyah عليها السلام was moved by the sight and tears dropped from her eyes. She wept bitterly and said, "Fir'awn, you will be destroyed. May my Lord punish you." He looked at her and said, "Aasiyah عليها السلام is a changed woman. Devilish and mad."

She said, "Nothing is wrong with me. I am neither devilish nor mad. I am perfectly sane. I have believed in Allah who is my Lord, Yours and of all these people, and of all universe." Fir'awn commanded that she should be punished in the most severe way like her servant. But he asked that first Aasiyah's عليها السلام mother should be brought. Her mother was brought and informed of everything. She went near her daughter and asked her if the accusations against her were correct; did she believe in Mūsā عليه السلام? Aasiyah عليها السلام confirmed her faith but her mother tried to convince her to believe in Fir'awn but she declined. So, Fir'awn gave final orders to punish her. She was being whipped by the sentries. Fir'awn and his henchmen observed the sight. If she made a sound, he ordered that more stripes should be given to her so that she might confirm like before that Fir'awn was Devine. But, she received the stripes and prayed to Allah (verse, 60 : 11 Surah at Tahrim):

رَبِّ آتِنِي لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَبِخَنِي مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِ وَبِخَنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١١﴾

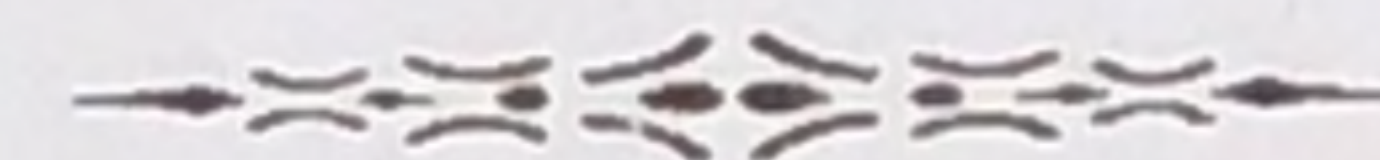
Allah accepted her prayer and included her among the martyrs and admitted her to paradise. He caused Fir'awn and his army to drown, making them a lesson for the future people.

والله عزيز ذو انتقام

And Allah is Mighty Owner of Retaliation.

Further Reading:

- 1) *Is a woman appointed Prophet? see Stories from the Qur'ān, (Darul Isha'at Karachi, English translation) v 2, p 289-295. (Aasiyah عليها السلام bracketed with Maryam and the mother of Mūsā عليه السلام.)*
- 2) *Stories from the Hadith (Darul Isha'at) p 238.*



Mother of the faithful,
Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها

Allah, the Exalted says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُم بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَا أَكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا
هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٢﴾

Surely those who came with a lie (against Ayshah رضى الله عنها, the Prophet's wife) is a party (of mischief- makers) among you. You (O Believers) do not think of this as an evil for you, rather it is good for you. For everyone of them shall be what he has earned of the sin, and he among them who took the bulk of it, for him shall be a mighty chastisement. Why, when you (O, believers) heard of it, did not the believing men and women think well of their own people and say, "This is a manifest lie?" (24 : 11-12)

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها was the daughter of the companion of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said about him:

الا ان امن الناس على في ما له و صحبتہ ابوبکر ولو كنت

متخزا خليلا لا تخزت ابابكر خليلا، ولكن اخوة الاسلام

Listen! He who has been most generous to me with his companionship and property is Abū Bakr. If I were to take a friend, I would take Abū Bakr as a friend, but we have the brotherhood and love of Islam.¹

After the Mother of the Faithful, Sayyidah Khadijah رضي الله عنها died and he married Sayyidah Sawdah bint Zama'ah رضي الله عنها, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم proposed marriage with Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. He sent Sayyidah Khawlah bint Hakim رضي الله عنها with the proposal. She said, "I went to Abū Bakr's رضي الله عنه house and met Umm Rumān, mother of Ayshah رضي الله عنها, and told her that blessings had descended on her and then I conveyed the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم proposal. When Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه came, they accepted the proposal. Previously they had received a proposal from Jubayr ibn Mu'tin, but they did not accept it. Thus, she was married to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The dower was determined at five hundred dirham.

Sending off of bride:

Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated to Madinah alongwith Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. After some days, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Sayyidina Zayd ibn Harithah رضي الله عنه to Makkah to fetch his family and Sayyidina Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه also conveyed message to his son Abdullah to bring his mother and sisters, Sayyidah Asmā رضي الله عنها and Ayshah رضي الله عنها to Madinah. The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم slave, Abū Rafi رضي الله عنه also went with Zayd ibn Harithah. while returning, all of them came together to Madinah. It was here that Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was sent off to the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم home.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها narrated how she was sent to her husband:

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to our home. The Ansar gathered around. My mother came to me while I

1. Bukhari # 3654, Muslim # 2382/2, Darami # 2190, Musuad Ahmed 1/270.

was in the swing. She got me down, combed my hair, washed my face and hands and took me along. She paused at the door and I was breathing heavily. Then she took me in the house. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sitting on a charpoy (which is a light bedstead in India and Pakistan). My Mother made me sit and said to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "This is your wife. May Allah give you blessing through her."

The people went away. The marriage was consummated in my house. Neither was a camel nor a goat slaughtered, but the food that Sa'd ibn Ubādah رضي الله عنه used to send to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent here.

Life went on happily. However, there are always some unpleasant occurrences in life; and the hypocrites falsely accused her of wrong-doing but it turned out to earn her a certificate of chastity from Allah. Only Allah is the One to protect the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم household.

The affair of Ifk:

Whenever the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went on an expedition, he took along one of his wives and it was decided by ballot which of them should accompany him. Accordingly, the name of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was drawn when he set forth for the battle of Bānū Mustaliq. It is a branch of Bānū Khuzā'ah and is also called Bānū Judhaymah. Judhaymah means Mustaliq which is to 'raise one's voice.' This battle is also known as the battle of Maraysi' because it took place near a well bearing this name. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had learnt that they were gathering together all tribes to fight against the Muslims. So, he sent a cavalier Buraydah ibn al-Husayb رضي الله عنه to investigate and report about their chief Harith ibn Dirār. Buraydah got the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم permission to speak to them as he liked to avoid their mischief.

He came to the well and, sure enough they had assembled and equipped themselves to the teeth. When they saw him coming, they obstructed him, but he said, "I am one of you. Having learnt of your intentions, I wish to join you in your fight with Muhammad. Now I will go back and bring along my tribe

so that we may be a force to be reckoned with and we may eliminate this man and his followers." Harith ibn Dirār urged him to make haste and he, turning back his animal, promised to return soon with his forces. He went straight to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

On hearing his report, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led his army forward. He took along Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and appointed Sayyidina Zayd ibn Hārithah رضي الله عنه as Governor of Madinah. Some hypocrites, like Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salūl, also enlisted themselves though their intention was to share in the booty.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave the standard of the Muhājirs to Sayyidina Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه and of the ansār's to Sa'd ibn Ubādah رضي الله عنه. He instructed Umar رضي الله عنه to invite the disbelievers to Islam. "If they say لا اله الا الله then they save their lives and property."

However, the disbelievers rejected the invitation, so, the fight began and arrows were shot from either end. Then, on the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم command, the Muslims made a single onslaught which the enemy could not withstand and were defeated. Ten of the enemy died, and the rest, men and women, were taken captives. The male captives numbered seven hundred. There was a very large booty including two thousand camels and five thousand goats. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded that the captives must be bound in fetters and Sayyidina Buraydah رضي الله عنه was given on additional share. Harith ibn Dirar رضي الله عنه embraced Islam and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married his daughter Juwayriyah رضي الله عنه. This marriage proved to be a blessing for the tribe. The sahabah رضي الله عنه released the captives in their hands because of this relationship. Then, they returned homeward from the battlefield. When it was nightfall they halted for the night. Here is what Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها narrated:

This journey was begun after the veil was enforced. I was in the howdah (which is a covered seat on the camel) which was placed down from the camel and then put back on it. We halted for some time in the night during which I had gone to answer nature's call. When I returned, I found my necklace missing, so I

went back to look for it. Meanwhile, the whole company moved ahead. They put back my howdah on the camel believing that I was inside because I was very young and very light-weight.¹ So, I sat down at that very place when I found that they had gone. I had my wrapper over me. A villager who used to follow the caravan to ensure that nothing was left behind came speeding along on that route on his camel. He saw me wrapped in my wrapper. He came close to me and recognized me. He was surprised and afraid, and exclaimed: إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون. He asked, "O wife of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, how are you here? I gave no answer being ashamed and modest. He was Safwān ibn Mu'attal Salami رضي الله عنه. He made his camel kneel down. I sat down on it and he took its reins and drove it towards the caravan. All through the journey, Safwān رضي الله عنه never even looked at me. By Allah, he did not utter a word and I had only heard him say: إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون. We caught up with the caravan at the time of Zuhr.

When they were at Madinah, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked her why she had stayed behind and she related to him the whole account till the arrival of Safwān رضي الله عنه.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had no doubt about her truth. Indeed, he could not disbelieve her because Allah had ordered him to marry her and she is his wife in both this world and the next and is in Allah's protection, but the hypocrites and the weak of faith saw her coming with Safwān and built up a story on that.

The chief of the hypocrites, Abdullah ibn Ubayy, spoke indecent words about her to those sitting around him. Hamnah, the sister of Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنه - the mother of the Faithful --- did not lag behind him in casting aspersion on Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها, and the poet of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Hassān ibn Thābit رضي الله عنه, Mistah ibn Athathah and Zayd ibn Rifa'ah also spoke indecently about Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها.

1. Tafsir Kubra.

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1. Tafsir Kubra.

This rumour and scandal spread throughout Madinah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه also heard of it. Every Muslim was disturbed. Only Allah discloses the truth and protects his pious slaves and Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه house was also in His protection. Only Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها did not know about it. Meanwhile, she fell ill and told her parents about her illness. Also, she did not receive the same attention from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who merely asked her how she was.

When the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم inattention grew, she sought his permission to go to her parents' home and he said forthwith that she might go. She went there and she had been ill for twenty days knowing nothing about the mischief.¹ One night, she went out to relieve herself when, Umm Mistah bint Ibrāhim ibn Abdul Muttalib رضى الله عنه, who was with her and was Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه cousin, slipped and swore, "Mistah is unfortunate." (Now he was her son as well as a participant of the Battle of Badr.) Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reprimanded her for speaking so of him. She asked, "O daughter of Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه, do you not know?" Then, when she denied knowledge, Umm Mistah related to her the rumour.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها wept. She came home and complained to her mother for not telling her about the scandal. She comforted her, "Daughter, do not worry. It is very seldom that if a woman is beautiful and her husband loves her and she has co-wives that people do not speak ill of her."

As for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is very difficult for us to imagine what he may have gone through. He was confident about Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها and he loved Abū Bakr's رضى الله عنه family as before. He came among the people and spoke to the people. He praised Allah and said, "O people! What is wrong with people? They hurt me concerning my wife. They blame her unjustly. By Allah, I have not known from her but good. She has piety and good." Tears came to the eyes of his listeners. They were all grieved because the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was hurt. Some of the Sahābah رضى الله عنه were prepared to seek revenge from those who had perpetrated the evil and some, indeed, resolved to fight them. Sayyidina Usayd ibn Hudayr رضى الله عنه stood up and said, "O Messenger of Allah, if the rumor-

1. Aybab un Nuzul – Naysabun. Tafsir Qurtabi.

mongers are from the Aws then we are enough for them. But, if they are from the Khazraj, you give us the command and we will sever their necks."¹

Sayyidina Sa'd ibn Ubadah رضى الله عنه also stood up and said to Sayyidina Usayd رضى الله عنه, "You lie! You know that they are of the Khazraj. If they were your people then you would not have spoken so." Usayd رضى الله عنه accused him angrily, "Sa'd, you are supporting the hypocrites." The two tribes nearly came to blows. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه and Usamah ibn Zayd رضى الله عنه and sought their advice. The latter praised the family of Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه and the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wife and said that the rumours were a pack of lies. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه said, "O Messenger of Allah, there is no dearth of women. There are other women besides her. You ask the female slave about her, she will reveal to you." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned Sayyidah Barirah رضى الله عنها and asked her about Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. She assured him that she had seen no wrong in her. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه got up and began to beat her and asked her to speak the truth. She said on oath that there was nothing bad in Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها. She said, "The most is that when I knead bread and keep it in her care, she goes to sleep letting the sheep devour it."²

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then went to Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه house when he and his wife and an Ansar woman were there. She and Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها were weeping. He came to them and praised and sanctified Allah. Then he said, "O Ayshah رضى الله عنها, people say something about you. If that is correct then repent to Allah, for, he accepts repentance."³ The moment she heard these words, her tears dried up. She was terrified and could not speak though she wished to speak. Her limbs --- as her tongue --- failed to respond. She looked imploringly towards her parents that they might say something for her but they too were in a state of shock. She said to her father finally, "Father, why do you not speak for me?" He said, "Dear daughter! By Allah we do not know what to say." Umm Ruman رضى الله عنها also could not

1. (Qasas ul Anbiya) Stories of the Prophets, Ibn Kathir.

2. Siratun Nabi, Ibn Kathir, v 3, p 308 (English Translation: the Life of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم under printed: p 430 Darul-Isha'at).

3. Tarikh Tabari v 3 p 67.

speak. Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها herself ventured to say to her husband, "By Allah, the repentance that you mention, I will never make. By Allah, if I confirm what people say then that would be untrue. Allah knows that I am innocent and if I deny, you people will reject me. But, I will say what Yūsuf's father had said:

فَصَبِّرْ جَمِيلٌ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

Goodly patience! And Allah is he whose help is ever there to seek against that which you describe. (12 : 18)

She did not say anything else after that.¹

Shortly thereafter, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received a revelation. Her parents awaited Divine mercy. The whole house was calm, and absolute quiet prevailed. Signs of revelation abated, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wiped off perspiration from his forehead and said, "Good tidings, Ayshah رضى الله عنها! Allah has absolved you of sin." Abū Bakr's رضى الله عنه face brightened and the burden was taken off from his shoulders and his heart was at peace. Sayyidah Umm Rumān رضى الله عنها got up and took her darling daughter in her lap and asked her to go to her husband. But, she said, "I will never get up and will not praise anyone other than Allah. He has absolved me."

Then she asked her father why he had not offered an excuse for her, and he said that he could not do so without having known the facts. He then praised Allah and went down in prostration of gratitude. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went to the mosque and recited the revelation he had received:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُم بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَا أَكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ تَوَلَّى إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٢﴾ تَوَلَّى جَاءُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ

1. Tarikh Tabari.

فَأُولَٰئِكَ عِندَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَذِبُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

Surely those who came with a lie (against Ayshah رضى الله عنها, the Prophet's wife) is a party (of mischief-makers) among you. You (O Believers) do not think of this as an evil for you, rather it is good for you. For everyone of them shall be what he has earned of the sin, and he among them who took the bulk of it, for him shall be a mighty chastisement. Why, when you heard of it, did not the believing men and women think well of their own people and say, "This is a manifest lie?" Why did they (the slanderers) not bring four witnesses thereof? So, as they have not brought witnesses, so those are the liars in the sight of Allah. And had there not been Allah's bounty upon you and His mercy in this world and the Hereafter, there would have certainly visited you a mighty chastisement on account of what you have indulged in. (24 : 11-14)

The Qur'an did not stop at mentioning the innocence of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها but it prescribed stripes for those who had scandalised her. This clear command was enforced:

وَالَّذِينَ يَزْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤﴾

And those who accuse chaste women, and then bring not four witnesses, scourge them with eighty stripes, and never ever accept their testimony, and those – they are the transgressors. (24 : 4)

Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم enforced the Divine command. The hadd (prescribed limit) was enforced on Mistah ibn Athathah, Hassān ibn Thabit and Hamnah bint Jahsh. Eighty stripes were awarded to each of them.

Hassān ibn Thābit رضى الله عنه realised his mistake and he was remorseful over it all his life. He was the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم poet and then came to be called 'poet of the Muslims and Islam.' After this event of ifk, people kept away from him, so he was much grieved. He composed a lengthy ode in which he regretted

his behavior with the Mother of the Faithful, Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها.

May Allah forgive him. The Muslims have forgiven him and taken him back in their ranks, for, Islam forgives and loves. Sayyidina Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه also forgave him.

Sayyidah Ayshah's رضي الله عنها return:

She returned to the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم house with more honour because the Qur'ān had declared her innocence and raised her in honour. She and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم loved one another more dearly and he told her once, "I can tell when you are pleased and when displeased." She asked, "How, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "When you are pleased, you say, 'By the Lord of Muhammad!' otherwise, you say, 'By the Lord of Ibrahim!'" She said, "O Messenger of Allah! By Allah, I will never again omit your name."¹

She often boasted before her co-wives that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had said to her, "Ayshah رضي الله عنها, your love is strong in my heart like a ring of an iron chain."

Sayyidina Amr ibn Aas رضي الله عنه said that he had asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who he loved most. He said, "Ayshah رضي الله عنها." He asked, "Who among men?" The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Her father." When he asked about the next, he said, "Umar," and took other names.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها used to say with pride that she was married to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the month of Shawwal and their marriage was consummated in the month of Shawwal again and no one else can say the same thing about themselves.

The other wives of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم requested Sayyidah Fātimah رضي الله عنها once to plead their case before the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and she spoke to him. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was also there. She said, "Father! Your wives have requested me to tell you that you do not give them the same love

1. Bukhari: Kitab us-Sirah. Bukhari, Mislim # 2442 (Kibab ul Manaqib and Kitab' al Fadail resectively.)

as you give to the daughter of Abū Qahāfah."¹ He said, "O beloved daughter, do you love whom I love?" She said, "Yes!" So he said, "Then love her (Ayshah رضي الله عنها)." She then told the other wives that she would never speak to them about Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها.²

They lived in this manner till the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم death. He died with his head in her lap. She said, "I felt that his head was heavier. His eyes were towards the heaven and he said: بل الرفيق الاعلو من الجنة (Rather, the companion of High from Paradise). He chose his Lord who sent him with the truth. His soul was thus taken away. Then I put his head on a pillow and wept. With other women."³

She then survived for many years. She was a source of Hadith for all Muslims. She was a jurist. Her contemporaries said about her that her knowledge surpassed the knowledge of all other wives of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and other women.⁴

She died at the age of sixty-six years. She knew thousands of Ahādith of which two thousand one hundred and ten are narrated in Books of Ahadith. Sayyidina Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه led her funereal salāh and she is buried by the other noble wives of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in al-Baqi'. She had given this instruction to her nephew, Abdullah ibn Zubayr رضي الله عنه.

She was lowered down in the grave by her nephew Abdullah ibn Zubayr رضي الله عنه, and Urwah ibn Zubayr. May Allah send to her thousands of blessings and mercies. She has left behind an example for women in bravery, piety, purity, knowledge and deeds. She has left behind a permanent source of knowledge for many to draw upon رضي الله عنها.

1. Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه.

2. Muslim # 2442

3. Tarikh Tabari v 3 p 167

4. Isabeh v3 p 140

Further Reading:

Can creatures encompass secrets of the Creator) see
Stories from the Quran (Darul Isha'at, Karachi)
English translation v 2 p 353)

(the Affair of Ifk) ibid v 2 p 557.



Queen Bilquis

Allah says:

قَالَ يَبْنَؤُهَا الْمَلُؤُا اَيْكُمْ يَاتِيَنِ بَعْرِيهَا قَبْلَ اَنْ يَاتُوْنِي مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ عَفَرْتُ
مِنْ اَلْحِيْنَ اَنَا ءَايِكَ بِهٖ قَبْلَ اَنْ تَقُوْمَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ وَاِنِّي عَلَيَّ لَقَوِيْ اٰمِيْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ
اَلَّذِيْ عِنْدُكُمْ عَلِمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ اَنَا ءَايِكَ بِهٖ قَبْلَ اَنْ يَّرْتَدَّ اِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ
مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هٰذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّيْ لِيَبْلُوَنِيْ ءَاَشْكُرُ اَمْ اَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ
فَاِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهٖ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ رَبِّيْ عَنِّيْ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالَ نَكْرُوْا لَهَا
عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرْ اَنۡهٰنۡدِيْ اَمْ تَكُوْنُ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ قِيْلَ
اَهٰنۡكَذَا عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَاَنَّهُ هُوَ وَاُوۡتِيۡنَا اَلْعِلۡمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

He said, "O chiefs, which of you will bring me her throne, before they come to me in submission?" A giant of the jinn said, "I shall bring it to you before you rise up from your place; and surely I am strong, trusty for this." One who had some knowledge of the book said, "I shall bring it to you before your glance returns to you." Then, when he (Sulaymen) saw it settled before him, he said, "This is of my Lord's bounty that He may test me whether I thank (Him) or prove ingrate. And whosoever gives thanks, gives thanks only for his own soul, and whosoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is self-sufficient, Beautiful." He said, "Disguise her throne for her, so that we may see whether she is guided or she is of those who are not guided." So when she came it was said, "Is your throne like this?" She said, "It seems to be the same. And we were given the knowledge before this and we have submitted ourselves in Islam to Allah." (22: 38-42)

Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام became master to the affairs of the Banū Isrā'il with his father Sayyidina Dāwūd عليه السلام. Allah had subjugated to him the jinns, human beings, birds and the

winds; and together with the grandeur of the world. He also blessed him with Prophethood which is a great blessing. He prayed to Allah, "O Allah! Grant me a kingdom the like of which no one gets after me." Allah accepted his supplication and gave him that kingdom.

Whenever Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام got out of his home to go to the throne, all birds, men and jinn presented themselves to him. They bowed before him. He sat down on his royal throne. Everyone respected and obeyed him and this was Allah's favour to him. Allah grants to him whom He wills without measure.

Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام was very handsome and fair skinned. He had a fleshy skin and a radiant face and dense hair. He wore white garments. His father trained him in his early life but, when he grew up, took his advice in the affairs of the state. Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an their judgments, among them is the story of sheep that had devoured the fields of a people. The Qur'an:

وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ
وَكَانَ الْحُكْمُ بِشَهَادَةِ ۖ فَفَهُمَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكَلَّا ؕ إِنَّا حَكَمًا
وَعَلَمًا ۖ

And remember Dāwūd and Sulaymān, when they gave judgment in the matter of the field into which the sheep of certain people had strayed by night: We did witness their judgment. To Sulaymān We inspired the (right) understanding of the matter: to each (of them) We gave judgment and knowledge.¹ (21 : 78-79)

The sheep had strayed into the vineyard and devoured all the grapes. Sayyidina Dāwūd عليه السلام ruled that all sheep should go to the owner of the field. But Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام said, "O Prophet of Allah there is a better judgment. Entrust the vineyard to the owner of the sheep and ask him to tend to it till

1. This and the following translations up to (27 : 29) are from Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

he repairs it and returns it to its owner.¹ Sheep should be given to their owner.

If Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام ever learnt that Allah's command was not observed anywhere on earth then he would wage Jihād against them. He would often participate in the jihād and have a magnificent, large platform of wood prepared for him. The army and the weapons would be placed thereon and would command the wind to take them to their destination. Allah says:

فَسَخَرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُخَاءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ۖ

Then We subjected the wind to his power, to flow gently to his order, withersoever he willed. (38 : 36)

Historians² say that he had six hundred chairs placed on the platform. When important people came they would sit thereon near him. Noble jinns also came and sat next to human beings and birds spread overhead to give them shade. The chairs would take them and very long distances were covered in short time. The Qur'an says:

وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ غُدُوُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۚ

And to Sulayman (we made) the wind (obedient); its early morning (stride) was a month's (journey), and its evening (stride) was a month's (journey). (34 : 12)

He would appoint as chief of every species of birds; the strongest one of that very species. He would refer to this leader and take it to task when that was necessary. Thus, during a journey, water was scarce but neither men nor jinn could detect presence of water underground. Someone told him that the hoopoe could detect the source of water, but they were missing from the army. He said:

مَا لِي لَا أَرَى الْهُدُودَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ ۚ لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا

1. Tabari (v 1 p 487)

2. Ibid.

شَكِيدًا أَوْ لَا أَذْبَحْتَهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

Why is it I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees? I will certainly punish him with a severe penalty, or execute him, unless he bring me a clear reason (for absence). (27 : 20-21)

Indeed, the hoopoe had a valid reason. It found on flying over the palace of Bilquis a large garden and another hoopoe there. It asked that hoopoe why it was not with Sulayman عليه السلام. the hoopoe of Bilquis asked it, "Who is Sulayman عليه السلام? So it informed the other that Sulayman عليه السلام was a man whom Allah had sent as His Messenger and subjected to him the wind, the jinns, the mankind and the birds. But the hoopoe of Bilquis said, "What you say is surprising, but I have more surprising news." And it said, "These people are a large number and a woman rules over them"

وَأُوْنِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

And provided with every requisite; and she has a magnificent throne. (23 : 23)

And they worship the sun, not Allah."

At this point Sulayman's hoopoe remembered that he had strayed for long from the army of Prophet a Sulayman عليه السلام. So he flew there. Before he arrived, other birds told him that the Prophet was very angry at his absence and would punish him unless she had a sound excuse. He went there very humbly and submitted, "O chief! I have brought information that you do not possess ----

أَحْطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهٖ ﴿٢٢﴾

I have compassed what you haven't compassed. (22 : 22)

----- after I went from here." Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام commanded the hoopoe to related what ever it had seen, and it did so, saying:

إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ

عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

I found (there) a woman ruling over them and provided with every requisite; and she has a magnificent throne.¹ (27 : 23)

"But the devil has led them astray and they worship not Allah. They worship the idols and the sun. Their throne is adorned with rubies and pearls, gold and silver but they thank not the Bestower of these things."

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾

Allah! There is no God but He, the Lord of the Mighty Throne.² (27 : 26) — This verse calls for prostration.

Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام was surprised and said that he would investigate. He said, "Take this, my letter and drop it to them. Wait for their response and do deserve their reaction."

The hoopoe took the letter and dropped it in the lap of Bilquis, the Queen. She was surprised and scared but picked it up and summoned her ministers and chiefs and said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا إِنِّي أَتَىٰ إِلَيَّ كِتَابٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾ أَلَّا تَعْلَمُوْا عَلَيَّ وَاتُّوْنِي مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

O chiefs! There has been cast unto me an honorable letter. It is from Sulayman عليه السلام, and it is, "In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the Merciful, (saying) "Rise not up against me, but come to me in submission." (27 : 29-31)

Her ministers and officers gave her advice.

قَالُوْا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوْا قُوَّةً وَأُولُوْا بَأْسٍ شَدِيْدٍ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَانْظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

They said, "We possess force and we possess great might. But the command is yours, so consider what you will command. (27 : 33)

1. Al- Bidayah wa an Nihayah, v1 p 20.

2. Al- Bidayah wa an Nihayah, Ibn Kathir v 1 p 20.

شَكِيدًا أَوْ لَا أَذْبَحْتَهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

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They said, "We possess force and we possess great might. But the command is yours, so consider what you will command. (27 : 33)

1. Al- Bidayah wa an Nihayah, v1 p 20.

2. Al- Bidayah wa an Nihayah, Ibn Kathir v 1 p 20.

She did not agree with their suggestion to fight but inclined to compromise and make peace. She did as any wise person should do by considering every facet of an issue. She told them that when a powerful people invade any territory they bring in their wake destruction to the fields, lands and people, and they humble the nobles and rule with an iron hand. She suggested that she could send an excellent gift to Sulayman عليه السلام. If he accepted the gift then he was like any worldly power and they could fight him because they were very strong. If he did not accept the gift then they would have to ponder over the next step. Accordingly, she sent her nobles with choicest gifts. The hoopoe hurried and informed Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام of all that. So, he commanded the jinns to build a palace for them the like of which they had not seen and would be bewildered on seeing it.

When they came, they were wonderstruck on seeing the palaces. Sayyidina Sulayman عليه السلام met them with a very radiant face. They presented the gifts and requested him, on behalf of their queen, to accept them. Allah had granted him wisdom and he who is given wisdom is given much good. He declined to accept the gifts and slaves and said very politely:

أَتُمِدُّونَنِي بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَانِيَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدْيِكُمْ
تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

will you help me with wealth? But what Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Nay, it is you, who exult in your gift. (27 : 36)

He told them that Allah had given him what He had not given anyone else and that they were a disbelieving people. He could not accept their wealth which could hinder him in propagating religion. He told them:

ارْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأَيِسَهُمْ بِخُنُودٍ لَا فِيلَ لَهُمْ فِيهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَدْلَلَّ وَهُمْ
صَاعِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

Go back to them, so we shall surely come against them with hosts which they cannot withstand, and we shall certainly

expel them from there abased, while they are humbled. (27 : 37)

They returned and gave their report. The Queen conceded that they had no option but to submit and accept their invitation. So, she took her people - all and sundry --- and travelled from Saba to surrender to Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام. When he learnt of their arrival, he said to those around him of men and jinns:¹

يَتَأْتِيهَا الْمَلُوكُ أَتَيْتَنِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ
الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتَايَكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ ﴿٣٩﴾

"O chiefs! Which of you will bring me her throne, before they come to me in submission?" A giant of the jinn said, "I shall bring it to you before you rise up from your place." (27 : 38-39)

A knowledgeable among them said:

أَنَا آتَايَكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ﴿٤٠﴾

I shall bring it to you before even your glance returns to you. (27 : 40)

This man of knowledge got the better of the jinns. He got the throne within the blink of an eye. Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام thanked Allah for the blessing whereby He tried him whether he was grateful or not. He instructed the jinns and men to make some changes to the throne to see if she was intelligent enough to recognize it. When she came and was asked about it, she wondered how it could reach therein such a short time in spite of being placed under many guards. "But," she said, "it seems the very one."

The she was taken to a palace of glass prepared specially for her. When she entered it, she thought that it was a pond of water and raised her garments revealing her shanks. She was told that there was no water but a clean palace built of glass. She was amazed and recognized Allah's power. Her heart was filled with faith and she confessed:

1. Al-Bidayah wa an Nihaya v 2 p 2.



رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ﴿٤٤﴾

My Lord, surely I have wronged myself. (22 : 44)

She regretted having wasted most of her life by not worshipping Allah. She affirmed that she embraced Islam only for Allah at the hands of Sulayman عليه السلام. She sought Allah's pleasure and ability to be obedient to Him Who is the Most Merciful for those who show mercy. She prayed, "If You do not forgive me and have mercy on me then I will have no refuge."

قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

﴿٤٤﴾

She said, "My Lord, Surely I have wronged myself, and I submit myself together with Sulayman عليه السلام to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. (27 : 44)

Therefore, Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام was given a mighty kingdom along with an exemplary Prophethood.

فسلام على سليمان وعلى واور عليهما السلام

So, peace be on Sulayman and on Dāwūd عليهما السلام.

Further Reading:

Stories from the Qur'ān.

(Darul Isha'at, Karachi) v 1 p 490 f (named Queen Sheeba)



Sayyidah Khawlah bint Tha'labah رضي الله عنها

Allah the Exalted, said:

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِنْ أُمَّهُتُهُمْ إِلَّا الَّتِي وَلَدْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا ذَلِكَ تَوَعَّظُونَ بِهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامَ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا فَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَاِطْعَامَ سِتِينَ مِسْكِينًا ذَلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

Allah indeed has heard the words of her who pleads with you concerning her husband and makes her plea to Allah; and Allah hears the conversation of both of you. Surely Allah is Hearer, Seer. Those of you who say concerning their wives, "Be as my mother's back," they are not their mothers. Their mothers are only those who gave them birth. And surely they are saying a loathsome word and a lie. And surely Allah is pardoning, forgiving. And those who say concerning their wives, "Be as my mother's back," then retract what they have said, must free a slave before the two of them touch one another. To this you are exhorted. And Allah is Aware of what you do. But he who finds not the means then on him is the fasting for two consecutive months before the two of them touch one another. But if he is not able to do it, then on him is the feeding of sixty indigent persons. That is in order that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are Allah's limits. And for the disbelievers is a painful chastisement. (58 : 1-4)

This great woman deserves to be congratulated. Her station is worth envying. Allah heard her complaint and answered her in the Qur'an thereby giving her a place of honour.

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم house in Madinah was a refuge for every scared and worried person --- and for every seeker of truth and knowledge. This woman who also knocked at the refuge was Sayyidah Khawlah bint Tha'labah ibn Asram khazraji.

She was married to Sayyidina Aws ibn as-Sāmit, brother or Ubadah ibn as-Sāmit, and was a very early Muslim, who loved Islam dearly, as did his family. When she married, she was very beautiful and self-sufficient in wealth. She lived in peace even after her marriage and when she heard of Islam she accepted it willingly. She swore allegiance to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, being the first Ansār woman to do so. He husband too swore allegiance to him.

They lived a happy life and even with age her beauty did not subside. While she was offering salāh one day, her husband looked at her and recalled the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Hadith about a wife:

إذا نظر إليها سرتة

When he looks at her, she pleases him.

He thought, "Indeed, she pleases me," and he was inclined to cuddle her but she was engaged in salāh. When she had finished, he made advances but she was averse and moved away. He lost his temper and, in his anger, said that she was forbidden to him like his mother, saying:

انت على كظرامي

"You are to me like the back of my mother."

Sayyidah Khawlah was taken off guard by these words of Sayyidina Aws رضي الله عنه, for, this was reminiscent of pre-Islamic days when a husband made his wife unlawful to himself forever by using these words. She moved away from her husband

because these were the harshest words of divorce leaving no option to revoke it.

She felt pained deeply, for, that was a life time separation from her dear husband. This was not less than punishment to keep away from the father of the children who was her repose during her hardship. Merely sitting by him brought her peace. How many springs of life she had spent with him! They had never disagreed or had an unpleasant word. "What will happen, O Allah! Why did it happen?" She blamed herself. What if she had responded positively! She told him that he could have been a little patient and avoided the split in the family. Their children would not have suffered. "O Aws رضي الله عنه, may Allah forgive you!" She was immersed in grief. Tears did not stop from her eyes. Regret and remorse was writ large all over her. She comforted herself that she would have recourse to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who would guide them. Sayyidina Aws رضي الله عنه went through the same experience. He was very sorry, a picture of grief and deeply remorseful. He said, "Khawlah, now you are forbidden to me and there is no way we may patch up again." She said, "You did not use the word tallāq (divorce). Your words were use in the jahiliyah for everlasting separation. Go to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and tell him everything. He will guide us." He said, "I am ashamed. I dare not ask him for a solution. But, you do go. Allah may deliver us from the tragic event."¹

Therefore, Sayyidah Khawlah رضي الله عنها went to the house of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. Ansār women often visited her. They had deep affection for her, and the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم home was a refuge and hope for every grief-stricken, and an assembly of knowledge for every seeker. She knocked at the door and Sayyidina Ayshah رضي الله عنها welcomed her and presented her to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She sat down facing him and narrated her tale of woe and confessed her fault. She spoke of their young love and this plight in old age and said, "If I entrust my children to him, they will suffer and if I keep them with me then they will be hungry." She pleaded that Aws had not used the word tallāq.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I see nothing but unlawfulness in it, but I have no command for this case. I have

1. Tabaqat, Ibn Sa'd, p 378.

no command in this matter." He never gave a decision on his own. The Qur'an affirmed this nature in him:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴿٤﴾

He does not speak out of (his own) desire; this is naught but a revelation revealed. (53 : 3-4)

He gave no judgment. She argued with him that there ought to be a solution to this problem. Finding no answer, she raised her hands to Allah then and there, "O Allah! I complain to You of my grief. Remove my grief of separation from my husband. O Allah! Reveal a way out through the tongue of Your Prophet."¹

She made this supplication to Allah in the house of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. Everyone in the house heard her. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said, "This supplication of Khawlah made me and the others weep out of pity for her."²

Meanwhile, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent someone to Sayyidina Aws ibn Sāmit رضي الله عنه it to get details of the case from him. When he came to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he asked, "What is it that your cousin says?" He said, "She speaks the truth. I have committed zihār with her.³ O Messenger of Allah! What do you command us in this case?" He said, "Till you receive my command, do not approach her." Aws رضي الله عنه observed complete silence while Sayyidah Khawlah رضي الله عنها said, "O Messenger of Allah, he has nothing. It is I who give him his provision."⁴

Everyone awaited the divine command. The two people involved prayed imploringly to Allah. Sayyidah Khawlah رضي الله عنها now looked at the heaven, now around her and now at the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم tongue to listen to Allah's mercy and a redressal of her plight. There! Signs of coming of revelation were apparent on the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم face! There was perspiration on his forehead!

1. Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, p 379.

2. Ibid.

3. 'Zihar' is the word for what Aws رضي الله عنه had done.

4. Tabaqat (Ibid).

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها confided to Sayyidah Khawlah رضي الله عنها, "A command is about to be revealed concerning you." She prayed, "Oh Allah! Let it be good for us. I expect good from Your Prophet."

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said, "While we expected the revelation, we could detect the anxiety Khawlah was going through, fearing a perpetual separation from her husband."

The signs of revelation were over on him and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم smiled. He said, "O Khawlah!" She hastened to exclaim, "Here am I. O Messenger of Allah!" She saw his smile and, in her happiness, stood up suddenly! "Allah has revealed a command about you and your husband," he said and recited:

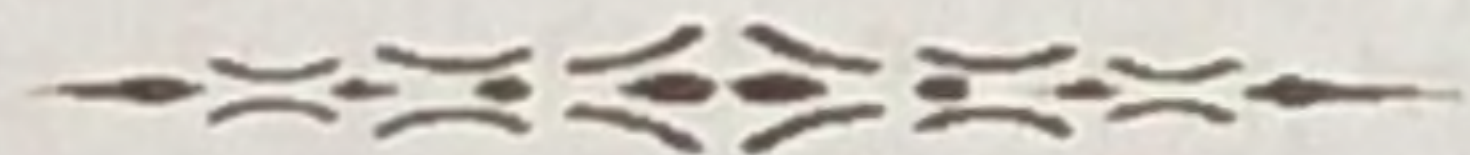
قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١﴾
هَٰؤُلَاءِ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِلَّا الَّتِي وَلَدْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢﴾
وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِن نِّسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَتَمَاسَا ذَٰلِكُمْ تُوعَظُونَ بِهِ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِن قَبْلِ
أَن يَتَمَاسَا ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَاِطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ مِسْكِينًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

Allah indeed has heard the words of her who pleads with you concerning her husband and makes her plea to Allah and Allah hears the conversation of both of you. Surely Allah is Hearer, Seer. Those of you who say concerning their wives, "Be as my mother's back," they are not their mothers. Their mothers are only those who gave them birth. And surely they are saying a loathsome word and a lie. And surely Allah is pardoning, forgiving. And those who say concerning their wives, "Be as my mother's back," then retract what they have said, must free a slave before the two of them touch one another. To this you are exhorted. And Allah is Aware of what you do. But he who finds not the means then on him is the

fasting for two consecutive months before the two of them touch one another. But if he is not able to do it, then on him is the feeding of sixty indigent persons. That is in order that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are Allah's limits, And for the disbelievers is a painful chastisement. (58 : 1 -4)

Till the end. Then he said to Sayyidina Aws ibn Sāmit رضى الله عنه, "Can you get a slave freedom?" He submitted, "By Allah, I am unable to do that." Then, "Can you keep fast?" He submitted, "I cannot do that too." He asked, "Can you feed sixty needy people?" He submitted, "If you will help me with sadaqah then I will do that." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to his wife, "Instruct him to go to Umm al-Mundhir bint Qays and ask her for a few waas of dates and give them as sadaqah to sixty needy people. Sayyidina Aws رضى الله عنها wasted no time to get the dates and disburse them among the needy. Now his wife was again lawful to him. Allah guided the other Muslims too out of ignorance.

This was Khawlah bint Tha'labah رضى الله عنها beset with anxiety and problems. She left behind an avenue of correction for people who repented their mistake. She turned to Allah and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and prayed to Allah sincerely and he accepted her repentance. Let us draw a lesson from this event.



The Prophet's household صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبَيَّنَ لَكَ مَرْضَاتُ أَزْوَاجِكَ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١﴾ قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذْ أَسْرَ النَّبِيُّ إِلَى بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا فَلَمَّا نَبَأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَ بَعْضُهُمْ وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ فَلَمَّا نَبَأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَأَكَ هَذَا قَالَ نَبَأَنِيَ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿٣﴾ إِنْ تَوْبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا وَإِنْ تَظَاهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾ عَسَى رَبُّهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَكُنْ أَنْ يُبْدِلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِنْكُنْ مُسْلِمَاتٍ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ قَنَاطَاتٍ تَحِبَّاتٍ عِدَّةٍ لِيَسْبِتَ أَتِكَارًا ﴿٥﴾

O Prophet, why forbid you what Allah has made lawful to you, seeking to please your wives? And Allah is Forgiver, Merciful. Allah has indeed ordained for you (O Believers) the absolution from your oaths, and Allah is your Protector, He is the knower, the wise. And (recall) when the Prophet confided to one of his wives a certain matter, then she informed about it (to the other) and Allah disclosed that to him, he made known (to her) a part of it and passed over a part. So when he informed her of it, she said. "Who informed you of it?" He said, "The knower, the Aware informed me." If you two turn towards Allah repentant, your hearts are indeed so inclined; but if you support one another against him, then, surely Allah is his Protector, and Jibril and the righteous Believers; and after that the angels are his helpers. It may be that if he divorces you, his Lord will give him in exchange wives better than you, submissive, believing, obedient, penitent, devout, given to fasting, previously married or virgins. (66 : 1-4)

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم home was an example for the Muslims. All excellent qualities pertaining to relationships were found in his home. Each of his wives vied with the other to gain more nearness to him and incline him towards her. Sometimes, their female nature got the better of them.

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم daughters were born to Sayyidah Khadijah رضي الله عنها. They were Sayyidah Fātimah رضي الله عنها, Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها, Sayyidah Ruqayyah رضي الله عنها and Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضي الله عنها in whose presence he found great comfort. However, like every other man, he too longed to have a male child, but till the age of sixty years he had no son. That was Allah's will.

Now, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also invited heads of many governments and states to Islam, the Muqawqis of Qubt among them. He had sent his letter to him through a sahābi, Sayyidina Hātib ibn Abū Balta'ah رضي الله عنه. In his letter, he also quoted the Qur'an:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَامٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ
وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
فَقُولُوا أَشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

O people of the Book! Come now to a word common between us and you that we shall worship none but Allah and that we shall not associate anything with Him, and that none of us shall take others¹ as lords besides Allah. "If they turn back then say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims."²

The Muqawqis read the letter carefully and with respect. Then he asked Sayyidina Hātib رضي الله عنه about the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He described him. The Muqawqis conceded that he knew that a Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to come but regretted that his people would not obey him in this case which clearly reflected that his throne was dearer to him. However, he sent a letter in

1 This portion is: "and that some of us do not take some others as lord instead of Allah" (Ma'ariful Qur'an v 2 p 92). Or, "and that we elect not among ourselves" (Abdullah Yusuf Ali)

2 Tarikh Tabari v3 p90.

response and two female slaves, some clothe and a riding beast. He entrusted the sahābi with these things and requested him to keep their conversation in confidence.¹

Sayyidina Hātib رضي الله عنه departed for Madinah with Mariyah qubtiyah, her sister, a slave, a thousand golden dinars, twenty garments of fine Egyptian cloth, an excellent mule called Daldal, some honey, perfume and musk. During the journey he recounted the history of Makkah and Madinah to his co-travellers and told them about Islam. He also described to them the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم habits. He invited Sayyidah Mariyah رضي الله عنها and her sister to Islam and they became Muslims.

He reached Madinah in 7AH shortly after the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had returned from Hudaibiyah having concluded peace with the Makkans. He accepted the gifts and chose Sayyidah Mariyah رضي الله عنها for himself and gave her sister as a gift to his poet Sayyidina Hāssan رضي الله عنه.

When the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives learnt that he had received an Egyptian woman with curly hair and an attractive nature whom he had lodged at the house of Harithah ibn Nu'mān رضي الله عنه, they felt hurt.² Each of them loved the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dearly and wished to have him exclusively. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها who was the closest of his wives to him learnt that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spent most of his time at the house of Sayyidah Māriyah رضي الله عنها because she was beautiful and fair complexioned. She was Umm Ibrahim --- mother of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم son, Ibrahim. Her place of lodgings, Aaliyah, later came to be called Ashriyah Umm Ibrahim. It is known for its dates and green fields.³

Soon, she was pregnant and Ibrahim --- a male child --- was born to her. When he learnt of it, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was very happy and he felt grateful to Allah.

The birth of Sayyidina Ibrāhim عليه السلام caused the standing of Sayyidah Mariyah رضي الله عنها to rise in the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم eyes. His visits to her increased and he was very happy on seeing his son.

1. Ibid.

2. Tabagat Ibn Sa'd.

3. Ibid (v8 p 212 - Account Mariyah).

One day, he took his son to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها and addressed her in happiness that she might enumerate his resemblances to his father. But, she had tears in her eyes on not having her own son and a merit over the other wives because of him. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not like this attitude of envy.

Once, while he was with Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها, she requested his permission to go to her parents home. He gave the permission. When she was gone, Sayyidah Mariyah came and stood close to him. Meanwhile, Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها returned and found her in her apartment. When she was gone, Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها complained to him about her presence, saying, "If you had any thought of me, you would not have done so," and she wept. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was hurt by this conduct. He could not have done such a thing to his wife who was also his companion's daughter. He knew that she would pass on her feeling of deprivation to her co-wives and they too would blame him. He decided to please her. So he confided to her a secret and she promised not to let anyone else know about it, but she disclosed it to one of her co-wives. He had forbidden Mariyah رضى الله عنها to himself and requested Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها to forget whatever had happened. She was pleased with this decision of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but could not keep the secret. She disclosed it to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها who also regarded it as an affront and soon all his wives learnt of the secret. All of them discussed the affair and took it very seriously. Then Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt of this and decided to take a stern step. He could not let it pass lightly. He swore to keep away from them for a month. So, he retired to a nearby date garden. His room had nothing but a rough jute mat and he posted his slave Ribāh at its door.

Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها was most repentant on this consequence. She was most given to keep fast and devote herself to worship in the night and regretted that she was responsible for letting out the secret. She had betrayed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

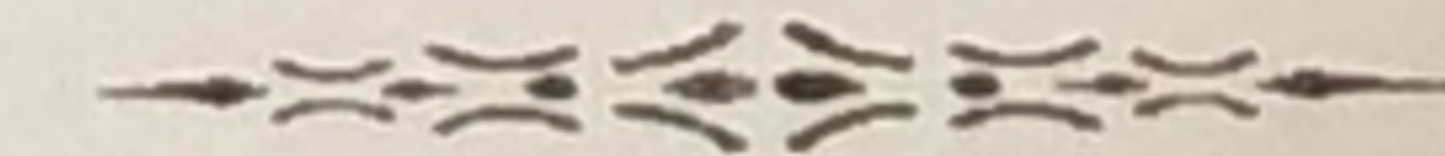
News spread all over Madinah that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had divorced Sayyidah Hafsa رضى الله عنها or all his wives. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه visited her and found her weeping. He said, "I think the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has divorced you. He had given you a divorce once but on my request he had revoked it

and now (these add up to two pronouncements and) I will not speak for you at all."

No one could muster enough courage to meet the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but since his daughter was involved, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه went to the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم lodgings. He sought permission to enter, so Sayyidina Ribah رضى الله عنه went in to seek it, but when he returned he did not say anything at all. He simply resumed his post at the door. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه again sought permission, but the slave gave no answer. So, the third time, he raised his voice while seeking permission and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave him permission to enter. He went in and began to weep. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him why he wept. He said, "O Messenger of Allah, why do you worry yourself about your wives? If you have divorced them then Allah, Jibril عليه السلام, Mikā'il عليه السلام, I, Abū Bakr رضى الله عنه and all Muslims are with you." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was very happy on hearing this but he told him that he had not divorced his wives; he had only severed ties of relationship with them for a month.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه came to the Muslims who were happy on learning that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had not divorced his wives but had vowed to keep apart from them for a month. Their worries about his personal life were set at rest.

When his noble wives رضى الله عنهما learnt that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was expected to return home, they stood at the door of their respective apartments to welcome him home. When she saw him coming, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها said, "O Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of Allah! May my parents be ransomed to you, you were displeased with me!" His face grew more radiant with happiness at her words and he recited those verses of the Qur'an that were revealed to him on that occasion.



إنا زوجنا كها

We shall marry her to you

Allah says:

وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ
وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ
أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا لِكَيْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا وَكَانَ أَمْرُ
اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾

And when you said to him whom Allah has blessed and to whom you had shown favour, "Keep your wife to yourself and fear Allah, and while you were concealing in your mind that which Allah was going to disclose, and you were fearing mankind, whereas Allah has a better right for you to fear Him. So when Zayd had had his want fulfilled of her, We joined her in marriage to you, in order that there should be no blame for the believers in marrying the wives of their adopted sons who have had their want fulfilled of them. And Allah's commandment is ever performed. (33 : 37)

Sayyidah Zaynah bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها said to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "O Messenger of Allah, I am not like your other wives. Every one of them was given to you in marriage by father, brother or a relative, but Allah gave me to you in marriage in the heavens."¹ She took pride in this fact.

She was very religious. She was also very generous. We will now look into her life. Indeed, we have seen that a verse of the Qur'an was revealed for her.

1. Al- Isabah. Bukhari (Jawhed).

Zaynab بنت Jahsh ibn Dayāb رضي الله عنها

She was the daughter of the Prophet's paternal aunt, and one of the earlier Muhājir women. Her mother was Umaymah bint Abdul Muttalib ibn Hashim. Her mother was the real sister of Abdullah, son of Abdul Muttalib. She was first the wife of the Prophet's slave, Sayyidina Zayd ibn Harithah. Then she married the Prophet.

If we peep into the times before the Prophethood, Zayd was not a slave by birth. He was son of Harithah ibn Shurāhil ibn Ka'b Kalbi Qahtāni of the tribe Zayd al-Laat.

His mother was taking him to her father when some people snatched Zayd and sold him in the market of Ukkaz for four thousand dirhams to Hakim ibn Hizām. He gave him away to his aunt Sayyidah Khadijah who gave him to the Prophet as a gift.

Zayd's father Harithah learnt of his whereabouts and met the Prophet in the Ka'bah and pleaded with him that he should release Zayd.¹ So, he summoned Zayd and he recognized his father and uncle but preferred to remain with the Prophet. He told his father that he would never separate from the Prophet who then declared before the Quraysh that Zayd was his son and they were heirs of one another. Thereafter, he was called Zayd ibn Muhammad. He was the first to profess Islam after Sayyidina Ali.

When he was of marriageable age, the Prophet chose for him his paternal cousin, Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh but her brother, Abdullah ibn Jahsh rejected him, and she said, "I will never marry him." However, the Prophet convinced them that Zayd was a good Muslim and a noble one and both his parents were decent Arabs. Both brother and sister agreed to obey the Prophet. This verse was also revealed on the occasion:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا

1. Tarikh Tabari.

And it is not for a believing man or believing woman when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in their matter. And whoso disobeys Allah and His Messenger has surely gone astray into manifest straying. (33 : 36)

After this command Sayyidina Zayd and Sayyidah Zaynab married willingly to thereby confirm that no Arab has merit over a non-Arab except on the basis of piety. With the help of Allah, they lived happily and he provided them with means of comfort too, for, He does what He wills. And He willed to teach a religious question to the Muslims.

The relationship of the couple took an unpleasant turn. Their love for one another gave way to hatred. Soon, Zayd could not endure it and he complained to the Prophet that he could not live with her. He comforted him and encouraged him to retain his wife with him.¹

Sayyidah Zaynab was passing a life of dislike for Sayyidina Zayd. She was conscious of her beauty and of her relationship with the Prophet and Zayd was fed up with this superiority that she claimed. She neither obeyed him nor was satisfied with life with him. He again complained to the Prophet who again instructed him to retain her to him. However, the Prophet had learnt from Allah that Zayd would divorce her and then he would marry her, yet he hoped that they would reconcile. He also prayed to Allah to cause them to live together cordially, but Allah revealed to him that His decision was final and he should not worry what people say:

وَتَخْفَى فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ

You were concealing in your mind that which Allah was going to disclose; you were fearing mankind where Allah has a better right for you to fear Him. (33 : 37)

So, finally Sayyidina Zayd divorced Sayyidah

1. Tarikh Tabari v 3 p 42.

Zaynab بنت Jahsh ابن Dayāb رضي الله عنها

She was the daughter of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم paternal aunt, and one of the earlier Muhājir women. Her mother was Umaymah bint Abdul Muttalib ibn Hashim. Her mother was the real sister of Abdullah, son of Abdul Muttalib. She was first the wife of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم slave, Sayyidina Zayd ibn Harithah رضي الله عنها. Then she married the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

If we peep into the times before the Prophethood, Zayd رضي الله عنه was not a slave by birth. He was son of Harithah ibn Shurāhil ibn Ka'b Kalbi Qahtāni of the tribe Zayd al-Laat.

His mother was taking him to her father when some people snatched Zayd and sold him in the market of Ukkaz for four thousand dirhams to Hakim ibn Hizām. He gave him away to his aunt Sayyidah Khadijah رضي الله عنها who gave him to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a gift.

Zayd's fathers Harithah learnt of his whereabouts and met the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Ka'bah and pleaded with him that he should release Zayd.¹ So, he summoned Zayd and he recognized his father and uncle but preferred to remain with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He told his father that he would never separate from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who then declared before the Quraysh that Zayd was his son and they were heirs of one another. Thereafter, he was called Zayd ibn Muhammad. He was the first to profess Islam after Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه.

When he was of marriageable age, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم chose for him his paternal cousin, Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh but her brother, Abdullah ibn Jahsh رضي الله عنه rejected him, and she said, "I will never marry him." However, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم convinced them that Zayd رضي الله عنه was a good Muslim and a noble one and both his parents were decent Arabs. Both brother and sister agreed to obey the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This verse was also revealed on the occasion:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ
مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

1. Tarikh Tabari.

And it is not for a believing man or believing woman when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in their matter. And whoso disobeys Allah and His Messenger has surely gone astray into manifest straying. (33 : 36)

After this command Sayyidina Zayd رضي الله عنه and Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها married willingly to thereby confirm that no Arab has merit over a non-Arab except on the basis of piety. With the help of Allah, they lived happily and he provided them with means of comfort too, for, He does what He wills. And He willed to teach a religious question to the Muslims.

The relationship of the couple took an unpleasant turn. Their love for one another gave way to hatred. Soon, Zayd رضي الله عنه could not endure it and he complained to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he could not live with her. He comforted him and encouraged him to retain his wife with him.¹

Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها was passing a life of dislike for Sayyidina Zayd رضي الله عنه. She was conscious of her beauty and of her relationship with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Zayd رضي الله عنه was fed up with this superiority that she claimed. She neither obeyed him nor was satisfied with life with him. He again complained to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who again instructed him to retain her to him. However, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had learnt from Allah that Zayd رضي الله عنه would divorce her and then he would marry her, yet he hoped that they would reconcile. He also prayed to Allah to cause them to live together cordially, but Allah revealed to him that His decision was final and he should not worry what people say:

وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ
تَخْشَاهُ ﴿٣٧﴾

You were concealing in your mind that which Allah was going to disclose; you were fearing mankind where Allah has a better right for you to fear Him. (33 : 37)

So, finally Sayyidina Zayd رضي الله عنه divorced Sayyidah

1. Tarikh Tabari v 3 p 42.

Zaynab رضي الله عنها. After the waiting period, known as the iddah, was over the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها. She used to pride herself on three things:

- 1) Her grandfather and the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم was the same person, Abdul Muttalib.
- 2) Allah married them off.
- 3) Jibril عليه السلام conveyed to each of them the Message or proposal of marriage.

This is why she prided herself over the other wives of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The background is that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was speaking to Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها when he swooned. Shortly, he recovered and smiled to say, "Who will take the good news to Zaynab?" And he recited these words:

وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ
وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ (37)

And when you said to him whom Allah has blessed and to whom you had shown favour, "Keep your wife to yourself and fear Allah. (33 : 37)

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم servant Sayyidina Salma رضي الله عنها went to Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها and conveyed to her the glad tidings. She stood up immediately and offered supererogatory Salāh to express gratitude.¹

After the marriage, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم slaughtered a goat and instructed Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه to invited people to the Walimah (which is a wedding feast). People came in large numbers and ate turn by turn. Anas رضي الله عنه said, "When everyone had eaten, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed me to remove everything. Some people kept sitting and conversing. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was also there and his wife sat, her back towards the wall. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not like the men overstaying. Then two men remained who kept talking. He went out, enquired after his wives and they too enquired about

1. Tarikh Tabari v 3 p 43. Muslim # 1048-2.

his new wife and then he came back but they were still sitting gossiping. Finally they went away and he put down the curtain."¹ The following verse was revealed on this occasion:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَى
طَعَامٍ غَيْرِ نَظِيرٍ لَهُ وَلَكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَانْتَشِرُوا
وَلَا مُسْتَتْسِينَ حَدِيثٌ إِنْ ذَالِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذَى النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَحْيِي
مِنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَسْأَلُوهُنَّ
مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ
تُؤْذُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَنْ تَنْكِحُوا أَزْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَبَدًا إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ
كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمًا (53)

O you who believe! Enter not the houses of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم except when leave is given you for a meal, without waiting for its cooking being finished — but when you are invited, enter, and when you have taken your meal then disperse — nor lingering for a familiar talk. Surely that annoys the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but he is shy of (asking) you (to leave), but Allah is not shy of the truth. And when you ask them (the Prophet's wives) of any goods, ask them from behind a curtain. This is purer for your hearts and their hearts. It is not for you to annoy the Messenger of Allah, nor you ever marry his wives after him. Surely that in the sight of Allah would be a great sin. (33 : 53)

The veil was enforced on the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives after this verse was revealed. Sayyidah Zaynab's رضي الله عنها age at the time of her marriage to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was thirty-five years. Her name was Barah. He changed it to Zaynab. He and also changed the name of Zaynab bint Abū Salamah to Zaynab from Barrah.²

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها confirmed that after her, Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها and Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها

1. Bukhari and Muslim (Hadith Walimah).

2. Muslim # 2142.

were dearest to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She said, "There was none of the Prophets's wives who could complete with me (in getting his attention)."¹ However, she had a disagreeable moment with her when she and Sayyidah Hafsha رضي الله عنها said to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they smelt gum although she had cooked excellent food and had served him honey.

One day Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها won her argument with Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remarked, "She is the daughter of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه."²

However, when Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was blamed falsely, Sayyidah Zaynab spoke for her and took a stand against her own sister Hammah bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said, "Zainab protected Allah's religion and said nothing but good."³

She also said, "I did not find any woman more religious than Zaynab, more God-fearing, more given to join ties of relationship, more generous and giver of charity and she was most of all engaged in getting near to Allah."⁴

This is a tribute from a co-wife. Indeed, she was from a noble family of the Hashims.

Before the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم married Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها, the arabs treated their adopted children at par with their real children in all matters including inheritance and marriages, etc. but, Islam enforced the correct and eliminated the wrong and Allah made His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم an example for the Muslims to emulate. The Qur'an mentioned it explicitly:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَىٰ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

And it is not for a believing man or a believing woman when Allah and His messenger have decreed a matter to have the choice in their matter. And whoso disobeys Allah and His

1. Sirah Ibn Hisham v 3 p 311.

2. Bukhari, Muslim.

3. Ibid.

4. Muslim # 2442. al - Ishiab.

Messenger has surely gone astray into manifest astraying. (33 : 36)

مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَقْدُورًا ﴿٣٨﴾

There is no blame for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in that which Allah has ordained for him. Such has been Allah's wont with those who passed away aforetime - and the commandment of Allah is a decree, decreed absolutely. (33 : 38)

Thus, the issue was settled that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the father of Zayd رضي الله عنه. It cannot be said, Therefore, that he married his son's wife. The Qur'an says:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

Muhammad is not he father of anyone of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets. And Allah is ever knower of everything. (33 : 40)

Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها loved the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم all her life and was faithful to him. He said, "She of my wives will follow me who has the longest arms." Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها who narrated this Hadith said that whenever they were together, they measured their arms on the wall but Sayyidah Zaynab was short statured yet she was the first of the wives to follow the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in death. So, they understood that he had referred to her generosity.

She did handicraft and dyed hides and gave away in charity all her income.¹ She narrated twelve Ahadith, two of which find mention in Bukhari and Muslim.²

After the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم death, the competition between his wives رضي الله عنهما on getting this favours also ended. Thereafter, everyone acknowledged that Sayyidah Zaynab رضي الله عنها

1 Al-Isti'ab 4/1851. Isābah 8/93.

2 Hakim, Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd.

عنها was dear to him. She had mercy on the Believers, was a dutiful worshipper and much devoted to Allah, the Exalted.

It is narrated that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه once sent her from the State Treasury twelve thousand (dinars). She prayed "O Allah, do not let me have this wealth again because it is a trial." She then disbursed the money to her relatives and the needy. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه came to her and said that he would send another one thousand dirham, but when he did, she distributed all that as before.

Farewell:

When in 20 AH, her death was near, she disclosed that she had kept aside a shroud and that Umar رضى الله عنه would send another. "So, one of these should be given away in charity. And if you can give away my waist down shroud in charity, do that."¹

May Allah have mercy on her. She did understand the meaning of charity. Let our mothers and sisters emulate her example and our daughters conduct themselves on Allah's commands and the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sunnah. Her life should be an ideal for every Muslim woman.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها said on her death, "A praise - worthy and a worshipping woman has departed from us. The orphans and the needy are now worried."

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had said, "The first of you to meet me will be the one with long arms."² Indeed, she was the first of his wives to die.

سلام على زينب في جنة الخلد

peace be on Zaynab in the perpetual paradise.



1. Al- Isaah Al-Isti'ab.

2. Al-Isti'ab.

Allah says:

وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتِيَتَكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ

Constrain not your slave girls to prostitution.....

Allah says:

وَلْيَسْتَعْفِفِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّى يُغْنِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ
الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا وَءَاتُوهُمْ مِّنْ
مَّالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي ءَاتَاكُمْ وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتِيَتَكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا
لِّتَبْتَغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَن يُكْرِههُنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِن بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ

And let those who find not the means to marry keep chaste until Allah enriches them of His bounty. And from among those whom your right hands possess those who seek a writing (of emancipation), so write it for them if you find any good in them, and give them of the wealth of Allah that He has given you. And constrain not your slave-girls to prostitution, if they desire to keep chaste, that you may seek the chance goods of the life of this world. And whosoever constrains them, then surely Allah is, after their constraint, Forgiving, Merciful. (24 : 33)

In the jahiliyah, even the noble Arabs compelled their female slaves to commit adultery and sell their bodies. This is a story of a sincere repentance and Allah's forgiveness.

The chief of the hypocrites had left no stone unturned in opposing every command of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Besides, he had not stopped at blaming the innocent Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها about whose chastity the Qur'an testified. Rather, he perpetrated worse and more daring crimes. He compelled some

female slaves to prostitution. How surprising that a noble of a tribe invited his guests to commit sin. His female slave, Musaykah, was 'permitted commodity' for every man. He gave her on rent. She was just one of several other of his female slaves so used.

In fact, the Jews and the hypocrites had joined forces secretly to conspire against the Muslims. Before the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم migration to Madinah, the Madinans had regarded Abdullah ibn Ubayy as a leader and were preparing to crown him as a king. But with the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم coming, they gave up the idea. As a result, the hypocrite had a grudge against Islam and Muslims. He always became angry at Muslim prosperity and victory. In the Battle of Uhud, he withdrew with one-third of the army angering the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When he failed to check the Muslims, he resorted to sinful ways and tried to spread in decency among the Muslims and corrupt the pure society that was building up.

He employed beautiful girls, Jews and non-Jews. And placed red banners before certain houses where they were available to men. He tried to lure young Muslims to these brothels and give up their chaste lives. Musaykah was one of these slave-girls and she had been employed even before the Muslims had come to Madinah. She and her mistress Mu'adhah were compelled by him to the life of sin.

With the advent of Islam in Madinah, these places of sin were also sent its message. Islam aimed at eliminating them and raising the status of women. Musaykah too was attracted by this religion and she was discussing it with Mu'adhah when Abdullah ibn Ubayy come to them and he threatened the two women. He forbid them to listen to the man who had come from Makkah and to meet women whose husbands were Muslims. He took a step further and promised them a huge reward if they lured a young Muslim to life of sin. Musaykah wondered why he tried to damage Islam and Muslims. Surely, there was something of significance in Islam!

Musaykah met some Ansār women secretly and learnt of Islam and the position of women. She learnt from them of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم and his companions رضى الله عنهم character

and realized how the hypocrite was exploiting her and other women. She learnt of self-respect and chastity in Islam and that adultery was punishable by the prescribed limit or haddh. Marriage was respected in Islam and women were given their rights.

Musaykah wept. She wept much and resolved to give up sin. She had also heard about Allah's vast forgiveness and she was aware that the tears on her cheeks were tears of repentance. They were the first steps to tawbah (which is repentance). She had been compelled to do that which the people of Jāhiliyah had approved.

She once heard a woman recite the following verse and she realized that the Qur'an guides to the right course.

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾

Say, "O My servants who have been prodigal against themselves, despair not of Allah's mercy. Surely Allah forgives sins altogether. Surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. (39 : 53)

Musaykha had a question for the women whom she visited secretly, "What is Islam?" They told her that is a testimony that there is none worthy of worship other than Allah, Muhammad is His messenger, salāh is to be established regularly, zakāh is to be paid, fasts are to be kept in Ramadān and Hajj is to be performed by those who can. She heard of many things that can atone for sin and heard the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "Surely Allah extends His hand in the night that the sinners of the day might repent and he extends His hand in the day that the sinners of the night might repent. This --- till the sun will rise from the west."

Musaykah pondered over it and saw through the deception of Ibn Salūl. She resolved never again to commit sin at any cost. Equipped with this resolve she returned to Ibn Salūl's home.

Musaykah told Mu'ahad of her resolve and said that she was

prepared to endure Ibn Salul's punishment.¹ Mu'adah said, "I too am with you. I have heard that Muhammad's companions are willing to marry women whose homes are marked with red banners and that they disallow sexual gratification between unmarried people." She cited the verse:

الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَلَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ
وَحُرِّمَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

The adulterer weds not but an adulteress or an associator.
(24 : 3)

Musaykah said that this verse was revealed concerning Umm Mahdun who was an indecent woman. She sought the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم permission to marry a man but Jibiri brought these words to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ

And the adulteress — none weds her but an adulterer...². (24 : 3)

Then each of them retired to her own room.

Gradually, Ibn Salul's income from this indecent business dwindled and he was worried about it. He questioned his supervisors and they blamed the Muslims and their Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for abstaining from the evil. Ibn Salul went wild about it and said that not only his crown was denied but his business too was disturbed by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of Islam. "Why does he not leave us?"

One day some tribesmen visited him for the indecent purpose and asked to provide them his choicest girls. He sent someone to fetch Musaykah and Mu'adhah, for, there was much money expected from these tribesmen.

When his messenger came to her, Musaykah refused to commit sin again and said that she had repented to Allah and was mindless of the consequences at the hands of Ibn Salul. He

1. Ashabun Nuzul. Naysaburi p 271.

2. Ibid.

may cut her to pieces, if he like. This man returned to Ibn Salul who was intoxicated along with his guests. He told him in his ear that Musaykah had refused to comply with his orders. Ibn Salul did not let his guests get an idea of his predicament but came apart and told his man that Musaykah will regret her words and come back disgraced. He went to her house and kicked the door open. She was offering the salah. The hypocrite pounced upon her and beat her black and blue but she did not even sigh. She knew Allah will forgive her. He turned back saying, "O Disobedient one, I will get you killed." Some of his henchmen protested, "O Abu Hibab, do not do it." He raged, "How do you say that? Muhammad's ideas have intruded every where in our affairs. But I will be patient. Yet, I will have her nose chopped off." He went away with his henchmen. Musaykah offered her flowing blood as expiation for her sin to Allah, "O Allah, let this wash off my sin!"

Mu'athah came to her and comforted her. Much of the night passed away and they wondered how they should cope with the cruel man. Suddenly, Musaykah said, "O Mu'adhah! Tomorrow we will present ourselves to Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and put our plight before him."

Accordingly, they set off for him early next morning. On the way, they met Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and narrated to him their plight. He was deeply grieved. Then they met the noble Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and recounted to him their tale of woes. Allah's command was revealed:

وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتِيَّتَكُمْ عَلَى الْبَغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِنَبْتِغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْهُنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

And constrain not your slave-girls to prostitution, if they desire to keep chaste, that you may seek the chance goods of the life of this world. And whosoever constrains them, then surely Allah is after their constraint, Forgiving, Merciful. (24 : 33)

The Qur'an said that their masters who compelled them to sin were responsible and real criminals. It also prescribed that if unmarried people commit adultery then they must be given a hundred stripes each.

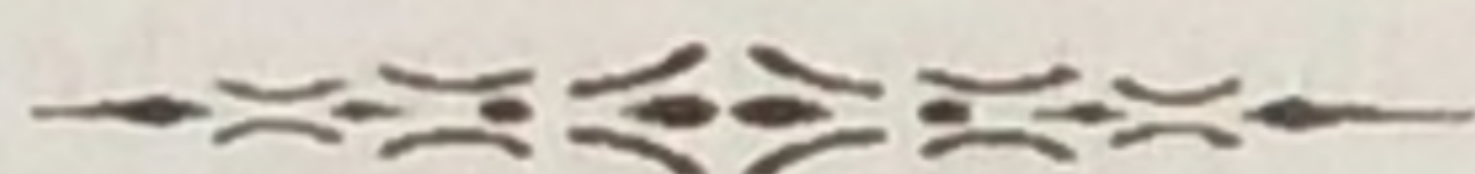
الرَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُم بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابُهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

The adulteress and the adulterer - scourge each one of the twain a hundred stripes. And let not tenderness for the twain seize you in regard to the law of Allah, if you believe in Allah and the last Day: and let a party of the Believers witness their chastisement. (24 : 2)

As for the married adulterer or adulteress, the punishment is stoning to death. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said about adultery, "It is an evil deed and income from it is the worst (income)."¹

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forbid income of this sort through a female slave. Both Musaykah and Mu'adhah رضى الله عنها observed the verse of the Qur'an revealed about them and they could not keep back their tears out of joy. Their repentance was accepted. Never must anyone despair of Allah's mercy. They fell down in prostration and expressed gratitude to Allah. This is how they associated themselves with the true and pure people. The news spread among the people and the curtain was lifted from falsehood and the owner of evil business, they received threat of a fire whose fuel are men and stone. But, the hypocrite failed to make a repentance. Rather, he repeated words of the Jahiliyah and of Abu Jahl and said, "Muhammad interferes in our private affairs, and has subdued us there too."

This is the story of one of the women mentioned in the Qur'an. She was compelled to a life of sin but Allah delivered her from punishment and forgave her all her past sins. What a pure and beautiful religion, What a pure and beautiful religion, Islam is! Islam guides to the lawful. The lawful life of a husband and woman procreates pious children on whom they take pride. They all obey Allah and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and attain an enviable station.



1. Ahmad, Abu Dawood.

Believing Muhājir Women

Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ وَءَاتُوهُنَّ مَا أَنْفَقُوا وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا ءَالَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجْرُهُنَّ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعَصَمِ الْكُفَّارِ وَاسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلْيَسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقُوا ذَلِكَمُ حُكْمُ اللَّهِ يُحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

O you who believer, when believing women come to you as emigrants, examine them. Allah knows best their faith. Then if you know them to be (true) believers send them not back to the disbelievers. These (women) are not lawful for them (the disbelievers), nor are those (men) lawful for them. And give them (the disbelievers) what they have spent (on them). And there will be no blame on you if you marry them when you have paid them their dowers. And hold not to ties (of marriage) of disbelieving women, and ask for (there turn of) what you have spent (on them) and let them (the disbelievers) ask for what they have spent. That is Allah's judgment; He judges between you, And Allah is knower, wise. (60 : 10)

Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm bint Uqbah ibn Abdul Mu'it was a muhājir woman. She had embraced Islam in Makkah and was a deeply practicing Muslim. Her mother was Arwi bint Kurz ibn Zama'ah.¹

Narrators of Ahadith do not know of any other Quraysh woman besides Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm رضى الله عنها bint Uqbah² who had migrated for the cause of Allah and his Messenger leaving behind her parents. She feared fro her religion being a

1. Al-Isabah v 4 p 1475.

2. Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd.

woman. So she preferred to remain in the Prophet's protection. She emigrated not for a husband or property after she came out of a trial. She had no husband to protect her nor son to support her. The Qur'ān narrates her story of trial.

Day of Hdaybiyah:

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم decided to visit Makkah only to visit the Ka'bah. He had no intention to fight. He commanded the Muslims to join him in case the disbelievers attacked him or prevented his visit. But the villagers or desert Arabs did not like it on the pretext of not visiting a people who had fought the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and martyred his saḥābah رضى الله عنه. They excused themselves in order that they might look after their families and properties. So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went with the Muhājirs, Ansārs and those a'rābis who joined him. They only had swords in their sheaths and he had taken the hadi along with him that people may not imagine that he had come to fight. Hadi is the animal that a pilgrim presents to Allah in the Haram when he performs umrah. He took the hadi that the Quraysh might know that his intention was only to perform tawāf and sa'ī between Safā and Marwah.

The Quraysh learnt of the Prophet's journey well before he was there and they took their army to stop him from coming to Makkah. They swore that they would not permit him entry into Makkah. Bishr ibn Sufyān رضى الله عنه met the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and informed him that the Quraysh were armed to the teeth and encamped in the valleys of Makkah. He regretted the attitude of the Makkans, "What do they lose if they do not interfere between me and all Arabs?" He said, "If they come to me, their desire would be fulfilled. If Allah helps me, they will join Islam in large numbers I will fight for this religion for which Allah has sent me till it is supreme or my head is cut off." He then asked if anyone could lead them through an infrequented path where the Quraysh might not be found.¹ A man volunteered and took them through a difficult path and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded his Saḥābah رضى الله عنه to keep to the right. Thus, when the Quraysh observed dust raised by

1. Tarikh Tabari.

the riders, they hastened back to Makkah to prevent the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم entry through the infrequented path.

At Hdaybiyah, the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم she-camel set down and he said, "He who had stopped the elephant has stopped the she-camel. I will do everything that the Quraysh wants me to do if there is joining of ties of relationship in that. He waited to hear what the Quraysh intended to do till someone came to him and said that the Quraysh harbored the same ill-will and conspired against him, but Allah's wish will reign supreme.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Umar رضى الله عنه to go to them and tell them of his intentions to perform umrah. But, he said, "They hate me and I fear for my life among them. There is no one to offer me protection. But Uthmān ibn Affān has relatives in Makkah. They will protect him." So the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sent him and he conveyed the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم message to the nobles of Makkah, but they offered to let him perform the tawāf. He refused to take their offer without the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم making tawāf. Here, the Muslims were told that Uthmān رضى الله عنه was martyred, so they swore allegiance at the hands of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم under a tree to wage jihād. Then they learnt that he was safe and worked for peace.

The Quraysh sent Suhayl ibn Amr to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the peace treaty was concluded between them. Its text is:

O Allah, we begin with Your name. This (treaty of) peace is concluded between Muhammad ibn Abdullah and Suhayl ibn Amr. There will be no war for ten years to allow people to remain in peace. If anyone from the Quraysh side goes over to Muhammad without permission of his guardian then he will be returned to his guardians. If anyone of Muhammad's side comes over to the Quraysh, then he will not be returned. There will be no theft or betrayal of each other. If anyone else wishes to take part in this agreement from Muhammad's side then he is allowed and if anyone wishes to take part from the side of Quraysh then he can do it.¹

1 Tarikh Tabari.

We had to refer to this peace treaty before we spoke more about Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضى الله عنها. She was sitting listening to her brother Umārah speak about the peace of Hudaibiyah. On the face of it, the Quraysh seemed to have had the upper hand, so the saḥābah رضى الله عنه raised objections but the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that Allah would help them and protect them.

Sayyidah Umm Kulthum was lost in her thoughts. She made a resolve in her heart and only Allah knew of it. She resolved to go to Madinah to take cover under the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم mercy. Her emigration would be only for Allah's sake and there was no worldly ambition motivation her resolve.

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم migration had taken place many years ago and Muslims had gained a number of victories during that period. But this treaty scared Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضى الله عنها very much, for, the clauses therein meant that she could not migrate to Madinah forever. She entrusted her affair to Allah to guide her to the right path, for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would never break his promise. She had no alternative but to take recourse to the writings of the Qur'ān on palm leaves that she had retained and hid from the Makkan disbelievers. She gained nearness to Allah through recital of the Qur'ān inscribed thereon.

She longed to travel to Madinah and secluded herself in her home. Who could take her there and protect her from the oppressors? Who would take this responsibility?

Suddenly, she thought of a man of Khuzā'i who had become a Muslim and was enduring harassment of the disbelievers ever since. She went to his place and spoke to him unseen by the disbelieving Quraysh. This man agreed to her suggestion and they decided to meet at Tan'im at a certain time.¹ So, she went out of her house unknown to her brothers Umārah and Walid.

In the morning when dawn cast itself over Makkah and light emerged from the east, Sayyidah Umm Kulthum was on the path to Tan'im. She had water and provision of the journey on her beast and she also had another she-camel unladen with any luggage. The Khuzā'i was there waiting for her. He took the

1. Isabah, Isti'ab.

reins and led her all through till they could see in the distance the date palm tress of Madinah.

Meanwhile, news of their departure spread throughout Makkah. Both her brothers hurried to catch up with her and prevent her from reaching the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. But, that was not possible. They had already made it to the source of light. When Umārah and Walid arrived in Madinah, they walked towards the Masjid Nabawi to meet the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidah Umm Kulthum was terrified on learning of the arrival of her brothers. She thought that if the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم abided by the provisions of the treaty, he would hand her over to her brothers who would take her to Makkah and torture her and might even kill her because she had forsaken them as well as their religion.

The brothers reminded the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of the treaty and demanded that he hand their sister over to them. When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her of her brothers' complaint, she pleaded that she was a woman and weak and if he returned her to them, the religion would be put to danger and she might not endure.¹ It was then that Allah revealed this verse, exempting women from the purview of the treaty.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمْ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَأَمْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ
بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ وَآثَرُهُنَّ مَا أَنْفَقُوا وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
أُجُورَهُنَّ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعَصَمِ الْكُوفَرِ وَاسْتَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلَيْسَ لَكُمْ أَنْفَقُوا ذَلِكُمْ
حُكْمُ اللَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

O you who believe, when believing women come to you as emigrants, examine them. Allah knows best their faith. Then if you know them to be (true) believers send them not back to the disbelievers. These (Women) are not lawful for them (the disbelievers), nor are those (men) lawful for them. And give them (the disbelievers) what they have spent (on them). And there will be no blame on you if you marry them when you

1. Zahabi.

We had to refer to this peace treaty before we spoke more about Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضى الله عنها. She was sitting listening to her brother Umārah speak about the peace of Hudaibiyah. On the face of it, the Quraysh seemed to have had the upper hand, so the saḥābah رضى الله عنه raised objections but the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that Allah would help them and protect them.

Sayyidah Umm Kulthum was lost in her thoughts. She made a resolve in her heart and only Allah knew of it. She resolved to go to Madinah to take cover under the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم mercy. Her emigration would be only for Allah's sake and there was no worldly ambition motivation her resolve.

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم migration had taken place many years ago and Muslims had gained a number of victories during that period. But this treaty scared Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضى الله عنها very much, for, the clauses therein meant that she could not migrate to Madinah forever. She entrusted her affair to Allah to guide her to the right path, for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would never break his promise. She had no alternative but to take recourse to the writings of the Qur'ān on palm leaves that she had retained and hid from the Makkan disbelievers. She gained nearness to Allah through recital of the Qur'ān inscribed thereon.

She longed to travel to Madinah and secluded herself in her home. Who could take her there and protect her from the oppressors? Who would take this responsibility?

Suddenly, she thought of a man of Khuzā'i who had become a Muslim and was enduring harassment of the disbelievers ever since. She went to his place and spoke to him unseen by the disbelieving Quraysh. This man agreed to her suggestion and they decided to meet at Tan'im at a certain time.¹ So, she went out of her house unknown to her brothers Umārah and Walid.

In the morning when dawn cast itself over Makkah and light emerged from the east, Sayyidah Umm Kulthum was on the path to Tan'im. She had water and provision of the journey on her beast and she also had another she-camel unladen with any luggage. The Khuzā'i was there waiting for her. He took the

1. Isabah, Isti'ab:

reins and led her all through till they could see in the distance the date palm tress of Madinah.

Meanwhile, news of their departure spread throughout Makkah. Both her brothers hurried to catch up with her and prevent her from reaching the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. But, that was not possible. They had already made it to the source of light. When Umārah and Walid arrived in Madinah, they walked towards the Masjid Nabawi to meet the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidah Umm Kulthum was terrified on learning of the arrival of her brothers. She thought that if the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم abided by the provisions of the treaty, he would hand her over to her brothers who would take her to Makkah and torture her and might even kill her because she had forsaken them as well as their religion.

The brothers reminded the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم of the treaty and demanded that he hand their sister over to them. When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her of her brothers' complaint, she pleaded that she was a woman and weak and if he returned her to them, the religion would be put to danger and she might not endure.¹ It was then that Allah revealed this verse, exempting women from the purview of the treaty.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمْ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَأَمْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ
بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ مَا أَنْفَقُوا وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
أُجُورَهُنَّ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعَصَمِ الْكُوفَرِ وَاسْتَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلَيْسَ لَكُمْ أَنْفَقُوا ذَلِكَ
حُكْمُ اللَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

O you who believe, when believing women come to you as emigrants, examine them. Allah knows best their faith. Then if you know them to be (true) believers send them not back to the disbelievers. These (Women) are not lawful for them (the disbelievers), nor are those (men) lawful for them. And give them (the disbelievers) what they have spent (on them). And there will be no blame on you if you marry them when you

1. Zahabi.

have paid them their dowers. And hold not to ties (of marriage) of disbelieving women, and ask for (the return of) what you have spent (on them) and let them (the disbelievers) ask for what they have spent. That is Allah's judgment; he judges between you, And Allah is knower, wise. (60 : 10)

These words were revealed. They also call for examining the women (for their faith). Other women who came after her were pleased with this verse. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had examined Umma Kulthum رضى الله عنها and the other women too.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها mentioned the bay'ah (allegiance) of women. She said that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم observed this verse and took examination of the women. When a woman met the conditions, then she was required to repeat whatever the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said. She said, "By Allah, the Prophet's hand never touched a woman. Rather, the bay'ah was only in words.¹

He used to say, "Call Allah to witness that love of Allah, the messenger and Islam has driven you out of your home; not love of your husband or wealth." When they made this declaration, these women were not returned to the disbelievers.²

Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضى الله عنها was also one of these sacred people who emigrated only for the sake of Islam. She had no worldly motive prompting her. When she was peaceful and calm, she married Sayyidina Zayd ibn Harithah رضى الله عنه. When he was martyred in the Battle of Muthah, she Married Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān Ibn Awf رضى الله عنه and they had two sons Ibrāhim and Hamid (or Humayd). After he died, she married Sayyidina Amr ibn al-Aas رضى الله عنه. And, in the times of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه as Khalifah, she died.

She narrated ten Ahādith, one of which finds place in *Bukhari* and *Muslim*.

Sayyidah Umm Kulthum رضى الله عنها was blessed with the wealth of Islam. She preserved it during her stay among the disbelievers. She was the first muhajir woman to emigrate from Makkah to Madinah for the sake of Islam. Some narrators go so

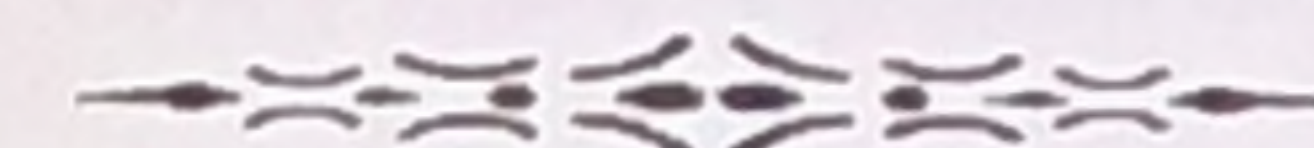
1 Bukhari.

2 Tabqat Ibn Sa'd.

far as to say that she traveled the entire distance on foot. May Allah have mercy on her!

سلام عليها في جنة الخلد

May peace be on her in the perpetual paradise.



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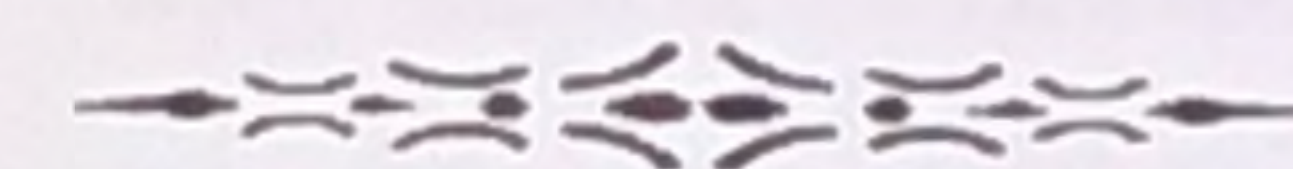
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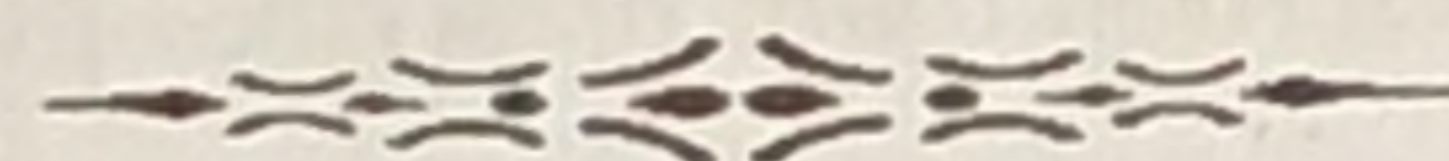
Glossary

انا لله و انا اليه راجعون	: We belong to Allah and to Him is our return.
رضى الله عنه	: May Allah be pleased with him / her / them.
صلى الله عليه وسلم	: May blessings of Allah and peace be on him.
عليه السلام	: On his be peace.
لا اله الا الله	: There is no god but Allah.
Ansar	: Muslim residents of Madinah who welcomed the Muhajirs.
Bay'ah	: Oath of allegiance.
Charpoy	: Indian bedstead.
Hadd	: Prescribed limit, prescribed punishment.
Hadi	: An animal offered as sacrifice by a pilgrim and brought by them from homeland.
Hajj	: Pilgrimage to the Ka'bah at appointed dates includes standing at Arafah.
Haram	: Sacred precinct.
Iddah	: Waiting period of woman after death of her husband, or after divorce.
Jahiliyah	: Pre-Islamic days.
Khalifah	: Caliph.
Kisra	: King of Iran.
Muhajir	: Emigrant.
Qaysar	: King of Rome.
Sadaqah	: Charity.
Sa'i	: The rounds between Safa and Marwah.
Salah	: Regular prayer.

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Salah	: Regular prayer.

Sayyidah	: Title of respect for women ('the honorable').
Sayyidina	: ('Our Master,' 'the honorable') title of respect for men.
Talaq	: Divorce.
Tawaf	: Circumambulation of the Ka'bah.
Tawbah	: Repentance.
Umrah	: Lesser pilgrimage to the Ka'bah (optional act of worship)
Walimah	: Wedding feast.
Zakah	: Prescribed charity.
Zihar	: Likening the wife to the back of his mother.



INDEX QURANIC STORIES OF WOMEN

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The Quranic stories of women are distinguished because of their beauty and objective. They offer beneficial knowledge and guide us to approved principles and laws. These are not for a select group but for everyone. The English translation is as near the original Arabic as possible and we hope our readers will like it and gain from it.

This book is good reading and very informative. We have endeavoured in our translation to retain the beauty of the original.